

\$5

A-League Round 16 Friday 11th Jan - Sunday 13th Jan 2013

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PHOTO: JOHN PUNSHON



W-LEAGUE PREMIERSHIP UP FOR GRABS HISTORY IN THE MAKING!

The Westfield W-League 2012/13 Season goes down to the wire in the final round of the regular season with three teams still vying for top spot.

Brisbane Roar, Melbourne Victory and Perth Glory all still have a chance to claim the premiership while the final place in the four team, two week finals series will be either Sydney FC or 2012 Champions Canberra United who take on Western Sydney Wanderers and Brisbane Roar respectively in the final round.

The Brisbane Roar v Canberra United clash is the ABC Match of the Round, and as a result, the match will now be played at the Queensland Sports and Athletics Centre with a 10.30am kick-off

(11:30am AEDT). Catch all the action on ABC1 from 5pm.

Due to temperatures expected to be in the high 30s for the Sydney derby at Campbelltown Stadium, the kick-off time for this match has also been brought forward from 3pm to 10am AEDT.

All four matches this weekend will play a significant role in deciding the final standings with all eyes on Round 12 of the Westfield W-League to see who will get top spot and who will make the four.

With the premiership, home semi-finals and a top four finish still on offer this weekend's action is not to be missed.

Melbourne Victory Women are attempting to break a seventeen year hoodoo when they take on

Newcastle Jets this Sunday with a chance of walking away with the Westfield W-League Premiership.

If Brisbane Roar lose or draw with Canberra United on Saturday, a win for Melbourne against the bottom of the table Novocastrians will be enough to win the club's first piece of W-League silverware and in doing so also confirm a maiden home semi-final.

In that case, not only would club history be made but Australian football history as Melbourne Victory would become the first female Victorian team to host a semi-final since the formation of the national domestic competition in 1996.

The significance of achieving

the milestone is not lost on Co-captain Steph Catley who is excited at the prospect of being part of the record books.

"It would be huge being a part of the first Melbourne Victory team to win a title, and the prospect of finally earning a home final for Victoria is just as exciting as it gives us a great platform to challenge for the Grand Final," said Catley.

"This is my fourth season with Melbourne Victory and despite playing in the previous two finals campaigns we've been unfortunate enough to have come away empty handed each time.

"There is a lot of trust among the girls; everyone in the squad is playing their part and we're feeling confident about what's

coming up."

With the fate of the Premiership not in their own hands, Catley admits that she will be keeping an eye on the Brisbane versus Canberra match but that the result will not be the defining moment of the season.

"The Jets had a great result against Perth last week, especially after such a long flight, so it's obvious their position on the ladder is not representative of their current performance levels.

Melbourne Victory Women take on Newcastle Jets this Sunday from 4:30pm at Wanderers Oval, Newcastle. Brisbane Roar faces Canberra United this Saturday kicking-off 10:30am at Queensland Sports and Athletic Centre.

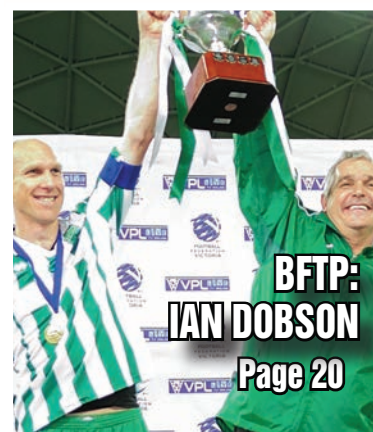
This Week's Line Up



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Tours To Italy

Victory & FFA supporting Tasmanian bushfire victims this Saturday

Melbourne Victory and Football Federation Australia (FFA) will be using this Saturday's Hyundai A-League match in Tasmania, to help raise funds for the Tasmanian Bushfire Appeal.

Melbourne Victory and FFA will donate \$5 for every adult ticket, \$3 for each concession and \$1 for every child's ticket sold to the Tasmanian Bushfire Fund, to help those affected by the tragedy that has impacted southern areas of Tasmania so terribly.

Melbourne Victory Managing Director, Richard Wilson said Victorians knew only too well the devastation bushfires can cause in the community.

"We've seen the tragic consequences of bushfires here in Victoria firsthand, with the affects of Black Saturday fires still being felt in our state," Mr Wilson said.

"The way everyone around Australia came together to support Victorians through the tragedy was inspiring and I have no doubt the support will be there for those now impacted in areas like Carlton River, Boomer Bay and Dunalley as they try to recover from the destruction the fires have caused.

"Tasmania has been a part of



Melbourne Victory for the past eight years, with the club playing games down there each year and we see it as an important part of our future. This gesture, with the FFA, is a way we can play a small part in assisting and this weekend's match at Aurora Stadium is a great opportunity for local and interstate spectators at the game, to support those whose lives have been turned upside down by the fires."

FFA CEO David Gallop has commended Melbourne Victory for the initiative of using the Launceston match this Saturday to raise funds. "Our thoughts are with those people

in Tasmania who have suffered the loss of property and belongings in the devastating bushfires," said Gallop. "On behalf of the football community across Australia, I send the message that the victims have our support in these difficult times.

"I'm delighted that FFA will be able to join forces with Melbourne Victory to help raise funds for the recovery effort."

There will also be an opportunity for people to further donate at the game, with volunteers collecting funds around Aurora Stadium on match day.

HOGG KEEN TO IMPRESS AT PHOENIX

Former Auckland City defender Ian Hogg can't wait to start training after signing a professional contract with the Wellington Phoenix that will take him through to the end of the Hyundai A-League season.

The 23-year-old Hawke's Bay born player impressed Phoenix coach Ricki Herbert with his performances for the All Whites and the New Zealand under-23 team, and now gets the chance to show the coach he is good enough to earn a contract for next season.

"I've been waiting a while to get a break here and now that it's come I can't wait to get started," Hogg said today.

"I think it is a good time to come in because Ricki is giving young guys a chance and playing a new style that I believe will suit my game.

"At the Olympics the team played a free style type of game which allowed me to get forward and hopefully it will be the same here."

Hogg acknowledged he faces a tough task over the next few months but is ready for the challenge. "It is up to me now that Ricki has given me this opportunity and I will be working hard to show I'm up to it," he said. Hogg did his chances no harm when scoring on his senior All Whites' debut against El Salvador and going on to perform solidly at the London Olympics where he started all three games.

Herbert was particularly impressed with the way he handled himself against a talented Brazil team. "It helped that I'd played against Brazil at the 2008 Olympics," Hogg said.

"I told myself not to be overawed by them and I went out

and played my natural game. I think the whole team played well against them."

Hogg's most recent club was Portland Timbers in the MLS who he joined straight after the Olympics.

While not making a first team appearance Hogg played reserve team games after initially having visa problems that stopped him playing. Despite not having played since September Hogg came through Phoenix fitness testing without any issues.

"No player likes the tests but while I hadn't trained for a couple of months, apart from some running, I am naturally fit and got through it okay.

"I'm sure I'll be fine after a couple of weeks training."

Hogg will train with the Phoenix squad for the first time on Wednesday and will be eligible to play for the club from January 14.

NO GLORY FOR OWEN



Perth Glory coach Ian Ferguson says former England international Michael Owen will not be joining the club.

A representative of Owen's contacted Perth Glory but the initial discussion did not progress to anything further.

"Michael is a player who comes with a high pedigree but it's not the direction I want to take the club," Ferguson said.

"I am looking for a younger player and a player who has been playing more regularly.

"I have three or four irons in the fire that I am pursuing, which is good.

"In terms of Michael, there was contact from an agent if we were interested, it was discussed at a good level, but I have made the decision he is the not the player needed at Perth Glory."



No chance of Michael Owenmania hitting the A-League.

YOUNGSTER DAVIES JOINS ROAR



Brisbane Roar has confirmed the signing of 18-year-old Julius Davies.

The attacking midfielder joins the club from Melbourne Victory and has put pen to paper on a 2.5 year contract that will see him in the Queensland capital until the end of the Hyundai A-League 2014/15 season.

"He's an exciting young prospect quick, creative and I'm sure the Brisbane Roar fans will enjoy seeing him play," Head Coach Mike Mulvey said.

"He can play in any of the wide positions but we'll see at training where he fits best within our system."

Davies has already had experience overseas, venturing to Germany as a 15-year-old where he played for the junior teams at Bayern Munich and 1899 Hoffenheim.

"I've been aware of him with his recent past with Melbourne Victory and before that, with Bayern Munich," Mulvey said.

"He's someone I'm sure the other players will enjoy having around and one I think that can terrorise the opposition on the pitch."

Davies had been with the Victory since returning home from Europe in January 2012 and scored the only consolation goal when the Roar triumphed 6-1 in last month's National Youth League fixture against the Melbourne side.

Following yesterday's signing of Qantas Socceroo Jade North, Brisbane Roar now have 21 contracted players in their Hyundai A-League squad.



Petar Franjic released

Melbourne Victory has agreed to release young defender Petar Franjic, effective immediately.

Franjic, 20, joined Melbourne Victory in 2010 and made 31 senior appearances for the club, including seven in this current Hyundai A-League 2012/13 season.

Coach Ange Postecoglou thanked Petar for his contribution to Melbourne Victory Football Club.

"Petar is a terrific clubman but, unfortunately for him, competition is strong within the squad and he decided that it would be best for his development to seek regular first team opportunities elsewhere," Postecoglou said.

"We wish Petar all the best for the future."

Franjic, who has represented Australia at junior levels, said, "I'd like to thank the club, the players and the fans for making my time at Melbourne Victory extremely enjoyable."

"As a young player though, I want to be playing regularly and for that reason I've chosen to explore other options," Franjic added.

Heart's Marrone set for China



Melbourne Heart FC has continued to provide a pathway for promising talent, with the Club permitting inaugural right-back

Michael Marrone to travel to China with the view to signing with a Chinese Super League club.

Marrone, 25, joined Heart in its inaugural campaign in 2010-11 and has been an inspirational and integral member of the Club in its three seasons in the Hyundai A-League.

The Club's number two will not play in Heart's round 16 clash with Sydney FC at Allianz Stadium this Sunday and will finalise personal

conditions in China.

The defender leaves after making 70 appearances for the Red and White, making him the Club's all-time appearance record holder, alongside Matt Thompson.

"Michael has been a great servant of the Club and has become a fan favourite," Head Coach John Aloisi said.

"During his time with the Heart he has become one of the competition's standout full-backs, with his performances drawing recognition from his peers and earning him a Socceroos cap last month.

"Michael has been presented with a great opportunity and the Club will not stand in his way of chasing professional football in the highly-competitive Asian market.

"Michael has always expressed his desire to play football overseas and we wish him all the best in his future endeavours."

Marrone has featured in 13 matches for the Heart this season, with his last match on Sunday finishing on a high, courtesy of a 3-2 win over Brisbane Roar.

A marauding right-back, Marrone has been one of the Heart's most consistent performers, while demonstrating versatility and effectiveness as a defensive midfielder.

After his first season with Heart, Marrone attracted attention from the United Kingdom from the likes of Queens Park Rangers, Charlton Athletic and Celtic, and drew strong interest from Serie A side Cagliari 18 months ago.

18 year Old Melbourne Boy, Anthony Carter, Signs Three Year Contract with Romanian champions, CFR Cluj

18 year old, Genova International School of Soccer graduate, Anthony Carter, has signed with the former Champions League team and current Romanian Champions, CFR Cluj.

Anthony was introduced to the team by his mentor, Morris Pagniello, Director of Genova International School of Soccer (GISS). It was at Genova International's Melbourne campus and then through the GISS European player placement program that Anthony was able to build invaluable experience and skills playing in Europe, first joining Vicenza Calcio and trialing with AC Milan before going on to join Cluj.

Director Morris commented: "Anthony Carter has stuck with GISS drawing on the opportunities we have been able to offer him developing his career over the last 5 years and this is still only the beginning of his bright career."

Pagniello was so impressed by Anthony's potential as a young player that he awarded him a scholarship at the Melbourne GISS campus. Since then he has worked consistently with him to ensure that he was developed sufficiently to meet the demands of the competitive European market where Genova is well positioned to then place successful graduates of its coaching programs.

Although Anthony is Australian, he has an Italian mother and improved his Italian when he moved to Italy last year. He loves life in Cluj now, too. "I am lucky that is it such a beautiful town and hospitable team. It's an amazing opportunity and I am extremely grateful that Morris helped me to achieve this dream-come-true."



GISS players Anthony Carter and Jeremy Butnaru with GISS Director of Football Morris Pagniello



Anthony Carter at a GISS football training camp in Europe.

TWO YEARS TO GO UNTIL ASIAN CUP COMES TO AUSTRALIA; QUALIFYING GAMES ABOUT TO BEGIN

The countdown is on to AFC Asian Cup Australia 2015, with today marking two years until the jewel in the crown of Asian football begins in Australia.

AFC Asian Cup Australia 2015 Local Organising Committee Chief Executive Officer Michael Brown was joined by Federal Minister for Sport Kate Lundy, Minister for Youth Peter Garrett and local junior footballers to mark the milestone.

“Preparations for AFC Asian Cup Australia 2015 are ramping up and 2013 is an important year for us to raise awareness, engage with the community and finalise the venues and the match schedule for the tournament,” Mr Brown said.

“With the qualifying matches beginning next month, on February 6, the look of the tournament will start to take shape.

“The Local Organising Committee (LOC) has been up and running for almost 12 months and activity is building up every week.

“We are working closely with the Asian Football Confederation to ensure Australia hosts a world-class event which celebrates football and continues Australia’s reputation for sporting event excellence.

“The LOC has had great support from the Federal and Queensland, NSW, ACT and Victorian Governments, who are providing funding for the tournament.”

The AFC Asian Cup, to be staged in Australia for the first time in January 2015, will be the largest football event ever held in Australia.

“Our vision is to deliver a world-class event that celebrates Asia’s rich football culture and leaves an enduring legacy for the game in Australia,” Mr Brown said.

“This presents an outstanding opportunity for Australia to strengthen our cultural, social and economic ties with Asia, including some of our most important trading partners.

“The Federal Government’s Asian Century White Paper acknowledged the power of sport to bridge language and cultural barriers and serve as a platform to build relationships.

“It confirms that events like the Asian Cup offer opportunities for Australia to build on our international reputation for delivering major sporting events, and to promote Australian tourism, trade and other interests in Asia.

“We’re expecting about 45,000 international visitors to come to Australia for the event. More than 500 million people watched the tournament in Qatar in 2011 and in 2015 the Asian Cup will have a potential audience of 2.5 billion.”

Matches in the 16-nation tournament will be played in Queensland, NSW, ACT and Victoria with the final in Sydney. Venues for the event will be announced in the coming months.

Australia, Japan, Korean Republic and DPR Korea have already qualified.

The tournament is the pinnacle for the 47 nations of the AFC who represent half the world’s population and some of the most passionate football fans anywhere.

The AFC Asian Cup 2015 is

being jointly-funded by the Australian Government and the Queensland, NSW, ACT and Victorian governments. Australia were runners-up to Japan in the AFC Asian Cup 2011 played in Qatar.



The AFC Asian Cup Australia 2015™ Qualifiers Groups are:

- Group A: Jordan, Syria, Oman, Singapore
- Group B: IR Iran, Kuwait, Thailand, Lebanon
- Group C: Iraq, China PR, Saudi Arabia, Indonesia
- Group D: Qatar, Bahrain, Yemen, Malaysia
- Group E: Uzbekistan, UAE, Vietnam, Hong Kong

Rogic bound for Spain for Celtic experience

SUSPENDED Central Coast Mariners attacking midfielder Tomas Rogic will depart Australia on Thursday to link with Scottish heavyweights Glasgow Celtic at their mid-season training camp in Spain.

The ‘Boys’ are currently in Spain preparing for the second half of the Scottish Premier League season as well as their UEFA Champions League round of 16 tie against Italian giants Juventus commencing in February.

Rogic will participate in training as well as sports science and fitness testing with Celtic in Spain, however the Mariners can confirm that no offer has

yet been tabled for the recently capped Qantas Socceroo. Central Coast Mariners General Manager of Football, Lawrie McKinna, said: “This is a great opportunity for Tomas to train with Celtic’s first team squad. Celtic are in their mid-season break and are busy preparing for their Champions League matches against Juventus starting in February, so Tom will undoubtedly learn a lot from the experience.”

Rogic will rejoin his Mariners teammates on Thursday 17 January, two days before he will next be eligible to represent the yellow and navy against Newcastle Jets on Saturday 19 January at Bluetongue Stadium.



Brisbane secure Socceroo Jade North



Jade North in action for the Socceroos in a 2014 World Cup qualifier against Japan in June last year.



Brisbane Roar is excited to announce it has signed Qantas Socceroos player Jade North on a three-and-a-half-year deal.

Brisbane-raised North joins the club from Japanese team Consadole Sapporo, with whom he made 21 appearances last season.

North has represented Australia at all junior levels and has been capped 39 times at senior level.

Having started his professional career at the Brisbane Strikers in the National Soccer League in 1998, North said he was excited

to be returning to where it all started.

“I’m looking forward to putting one foot forward and contributing to the legacy Brisbane Roar has created over the past two seasons and doing all I can to help add to the trophy cabinet,” North said.

“For me it’s exciting to know I will be playing in front of family and friends, but most importantly for the city which groomed me as a player.

“From a personal point of view I would like to acknowledge and thank Brisbane for the professionalism the club has shown throughout discussions and

negotiations with my manager Buddy Farah.”

Born in Taree, NSW, North moved to Brisbane from New Zealand as an 11-year-old, joining the Queensland Academy of Sport in 1998 before moving on to the Australian Institute of Sport’s football program a year later.

A proud indigenous footballer, North has enjoyed success at domestic level by securing NSL Championships with Sydney Olympic and Perth Glory, while he captained the Newcastle Jets to the Hyundai A-League 2008 Championship.

North, who celebrated his 31st birthday yesterday, has subsequently had international experience playing in Korea, Norway and, most recently, Japan.

Brisbane Roar Head Coach Mike Mulvey said he was pleased to have secured such a vastly experienced defender for the club.

“Jade has an excellent footballing pedigree and will bring a great deal of experience and knowledge to our squad,” Mulvey said.

“He is a proven winner and has a great appetite for future success.

“Aside from footballing ability, these are key attributes we are looking to bring into our squad to help maintain the culture of success at the club.”

North will join team mates next Tuesday for his first session with the club.

Ryan’s Rangers training period postponed



CENTRAL Coast Mariners custodian Mathew Ryan’s planned training period with Rangers Football Club, has been indefinitely postponed after the gifted gloveman

sustained a knock to his shoulder in Sunday’s 2-0 win over Western Sydney Wanderers.

While the injury is minor, both Clubs have agreed that it is in Ryan’s best interests to remain in Australia under the care of the Mariners’ medical department for the foreseeable future.

It is envisaged that he will be available for selection for Saturday’s Hyundai A-League round 16 fixture against Melbourne Victory in Launceston.

Williams Out For One

David Williams (Melbourne Heart) will serve the minimum sanction of one (1) match after receiving a red card against Brisbane Roar last Sunday afternoon.

Recchia returns South

South Melbourne FC is pleased to announce the return of former player and fan favourite Carl Recchia to Lakeside Stadium for the 2013 Victorian Premier League season.

Recchia joins the Club from the relegated Moreland Zebras, where in 2012 he secured the Mirabella Medal and Golden Boot award for being their best and fairest player as well as the leading goal scorer with eight goals.

Ibini to trial at Brugge

ATTACKER Bernie Ibini will travel to Belgium on Sunday for a trial with Jupiler Pro League heavyweights Club Brugge. Club Brugge extended the trial invitation to Ibini and the Mariners overnight, and Ibini has today expressed his eagerness to explore the opportunity.

Reds provide opportunity for exciting young duo



Adelaide United FC’s on field future has taken another exciting and positive step forward with the acquisition of talented local youngsters Awer Mabil

and Jordan Elsey on senior contracts.

The signing of the duo, who are both currently part of the club’s National Youth League squad, to two year deals commencing on 1 May 2013, notably takes the number of young South Australian talent under the age of 20 at the club to five, Mabil and Elsey to join Paul Izzo, Teeboy Kamara and Jacob Melling on the Reds’ senior list.

Rocky Visconte Joins Wanderers

Young attacking midfielder Rocky Visconte has signed with the NRMA Insurance Western Sydney Wanderers on a short-term contract. The former Australian under 23 representative has not started for the Roar this season. Between 2010 and 2012, the South Australian junior made 24 appearances for the Roar, scoring two goals.

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VICTORIA’S LEADER IN TEAM WEAR

SCOREBOARD

| TABLE | P | W | D | L | F | A | GD | Pts |
|--------------------------|----|----|---|---|----|----|-----|-----|
| 1 Central Coast Mariners | 15 | 10 | 3 | 2 | 25 | 10 | 15 | 33 |
| 2 Adelaide United FC | 15 | 9 | 2 | 4 | 24 | 17 | 7 | 29 |
| 3 Melbourne Victory | 15 | 8 | 2 | 5 | 26 | 26 | 0 | 26 |
| 4 West Sydney Wanderers | 15 | 7 | 2 | 6 | 17 | 13 | 4 | 23 |
| 5 Perth Glory | 15 | 5 | 4 | 6 | 16 | 14 | 2 | 19 |
| 6 Melbourne Heart | 15 | 5 | 3 | 7 | 20 | 22 | -2 | 18 |
| 7 Brisbane Roar | 15 | 5 | 2 | 8 | 19 | 19 | 0 | 17 |
| 8 Newcastle Jets | 15 | 5 | 2 | 8 | 19 | 28 | -9 | 17 |
| 9 Wellington Phoenix | 15 | 4 | 4 | 7 | 19 | 22 | -3 | 16 |
| 10 Sydney FC | 15 | 4 | 2 | 9 | 18 | 32 | -14 | 14 |

| THIS WEEK | ROUND 16 | FIXTURE | VENUE | LOCAL | AEDT |
|-----------|------------|--|--------------------|--------|--------|
| | Fri Jan 11 | Adelaide United v Perth Glory | Hindmarsh Stadium | 7:00pm | 7:30pm |
| | Sat Jan 12 | Melbourne Victory v Central Coast Mariners | Aurora, Launceston | 5:30pm | 5:30pm |
| | Sat Jan 12 | Newcastle Jets v Brisbane Roar | Hunter Stadium | 7:45pm | 7:45pm |
| | Sun Jan 13 | Wellington Phoenix v W Sydney Wanderers | Westpac Stadium | 4:30pm | 2:30pm |
| | Sun Jan 13 | Sydney FC v Melbourne Heart | Allianz Stadium | 5:00pm | 5:00pm |
| NEXT WEEK | ROUND 17 | FIXTURE | VENUE | LOCAL | AEDT |
| | Fri Jan 18 | Melbourne Heart v Adelaide United | AAMI Park | 7:30pm | 7:30pm |
| | Sat Jan 19 | Sydney FC v Wellington Phoenix | Allianz Stadium | 5:30pm | 5:30pm |
| | Sat Jan 19 | Central Coast Mariners v Newcastle Jets | Bluetongue Stadium | 7:45pm | 7:45pm |
| | Sat Jan 19 | Perth Glory v Melbourne Victory | nib Stadium | 6:45pm | 9:45pm |
| | Sun Jan 20 | Brisbane Roar v W Sydney Wanderers | Suncorp Stadium | 4:00pm | 5:00pm |

ROUND 15 RESULTS

Western Sydney Wanderers 0 Central Coast Mariners 2 (McBreen 41, 90)
Crowd: 16,387 @ Parramatta Stadium

Melbourne Heart 3 (Williams 13, Tadic 35, Fred 53)
Brisbane Roar 2 (Berisha 74p, 76)
Crowd: 6,303 @AAMI Park

Perth Glory 2 (Smeltz 39', 80')
Sydney FC 2 (Culina 63', Ryall 82')
Crowd: 11,200 @ nib Stadium

Melbourne Victory 2 (Flores 43, Rojas 52)
Wellington Phoenix 0
Crowd: 18,609 @ AAMI Park

Newcastle Jets 0 Adelaide United 0
Crowd 10,721 @ Hunter Stadium, Newcastle

TOP GOAL SCORERS

12 - Daniel McBREEN (Mariners)
10 - Jeremy BROCKIE (Phoenix)
Marco ROJAS (Victory)
8 - Dario VIDOSIC (Adelaide)
Besart BERISHA (Roar)
7 - Emile HESKEY (Jets)
5 - Alessandro DEL PIERO (SFC)
Mark BRIDGE (Wanderers)
Ryan GRIFFITHS (Jets)
Josip TADIC (Heart)



Last year's Golden Boot winner has by no means surrendered his title just yet, and a brace against Heart has Besart Berisha back up amongst the leaders once more.

A-LEAGUE TEAM OF THE WEEK Round 15

Compiled by Steven Talevski



GK: Eugene Galekovic – Another stellar performance from the Adelaide number one keeping a clean sheet away from home against the Jets.

RB: Pedj Bojic – The defender made a game changing clearance off the line denying Shinji Ono and the Wanderers from an equaliser. Bojic was also an attacking threat for the Mariners, bombing down the right wing which gave Western Sydney headaches.

CB: Zach Anderson – The central defender deputized well once again for the injured Patrick Zwaanswijk for the Mariners helping them to a clean sheet.

CB: Sebastian Ryall – Playing in his natural position in the center of defense, Ryall and the inexperienced Sydney FC defense were able to help the Sky Blues to a point as Ryall also unexpectedly scored the equaliser.

LB: Adama Traore – Another typical performance from the Ivorian born defender as the Victory kept a clean sheet. With Traore possibly being able to represent Australia within a year, a Socceroo's call up looks to be around the corner.

CDM: Mark Milligan – Returning after suspension, Milligan shielded Victory's back four well as they kept another clean sheet at home.

RM: Richard Garcia – Garcia's performance on the weekend was highlighted by a sublime assist for David Williams's goal. However his work effort in the

midfield should not go unnoticed as the veteran is fast becoming a fan favorite for the heart supporters.

LM: Jason Culina – After a difficult period away from the game it was nothing better than seeing the Socceroo World Cup representative score a cracking header. Culina could have had a double minutes later, but blew his chance over the goal.

CAM: Daniel McBreen – The A-league's top goal scorer added two goals to his tally when the Mariners visited the hostile crowd in Western Sydney. McBreen's first was the highlight of the game as he weaved his way through the Wanderers defense before placing the ball into the back of the net.

ST: Shane Smeltz – After only scoring two goals in nine games, the A-Leagues highest ever goal scorer got himself back on the score sheet with a double that included a terrific header into the back corner followed by a stunning strike into the top corner.

ST: Besart Berisha – After slotting in a penalty Berisha popped up for another goal as Brisbane Roar made a late comeback against the Heart.

Coach: Graham Arnold – The Mariners played like a team on top of the table as they travelled to a rocking Parramatta Stadium and picked up all three points along with keeping a clean sheet. Arnold's mix of youth and experience paid off again and his decision to play McBreen in a number ten role played to perfection as the attacker picked up a double.

Star Man

Daniel McBreen
CC Mariners



Like a wine getting better with age, the Central Coast attacker seems to be getting better year by year. Now 35, McBreen has risen to the top of the goal scoring charts in the a-league making age look like only a number in football. McBreen's double this week included a stunning solo effort before collecting a loose ball in attack and chipping the ball into the back of the game to rule out any late comeback from the Wanderers.

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Newcastle Jets



0

Adelaide United



0

Match Details

Newcastle Jets 0
Adelaide United FC 0
Referee: Matt Gillett
Crowd: 10,721 @ Hunter Stadium

Newcastle Jets starting line-up:
20.Mark Birighitti (gk), 7.James Brown (19.Michael Bridges 63'), 8.Ruben Zadkovich (c), 9.Emile Heskey (22.Adam Taggart 46'), 11.Connor Chapman, 12.Josh Brilante (18.Jacob Pepper 83'), 13.Sam Gallaway, 14.Taylor Regan, 15.Craig Goodwin, 17.James Virgili, 23.Ryan Griffiths

Substitutes not used: 1.Ben Kennedy (gk)
Yellow Cards: Zadkovich 15'
Red Cards: Nil

Adelaide United starting line-up:
1.Eugene Galekovic (gk) (c), 5.Iain Fyfe, 6.Cassio, 8.Marcelo Carrusca, 10.Dario Vidosic (18. Fabian Barbiero 72'), 11.Bruce Djite, 12.Antony Golec, 14.Cameron Watson, 16.Daniel Bowles, 17.Iain Ramsay (21.Jeronimo Neumann 81'), 23.Evan Kostopoulos (7.Zenon Caravella 63')

Substitutes not used: 20.Paul Izzo (gk)
Yellow Cards: Fyfe 70'
Red Cards: Nil

Stalemate as Reds hold Gallant Jets

By Shaun Dyas

The Newcastle Jets managed to keep their first clean sheet of the season as they were held 0-0 by Adelaide United at Hunter stadium in front of 10,271 fans.

The Jets had the better of the match but were unable to convert their chances through a mixture of their own poor finishing and some brilliant glove work from Adelaide custodian Eugene Galekovic. Jets captain Ruben Zadkovich was happy with the performance of the side.

"We showed a lot of resolve for our first clean sheet of the season which is something to be proud of," he said immediately after the match. His coach Gary Van Egmond was just as impressed. "We can gain a lot of confidence out of that (the clean sheet) and we created a good number of chances." John Kosmina was unhappy with his sides' performance in the second half but felt his team could still have gained more from the match. "In the second half I think we were all over the shop," he said. "But we still had that little bit of urgency and desperation in defence."

Earlier, Adelaide was the first side to create an opportunity in the 6th minute. The Jets turned over cheap possession and Iain Ramsay played in Dario Vidosic. His powerful strike from 12 yards was smothered brilliantly by Jets keeper Mark Birighitti. A minute later Bruce Djite also thundered a shot into Birighitti's side netting in a nervous opening from the home side.

The Jets were continuing to struggle to gain any meaningful possession and it seemed that it was a matter of when the Reds would take the lead. The Jets surprisingly almost scored against the run of



Close call: The ball flashes past Eugene Galekovic in the Adelaide United goalmouth. Photo:BEN NEVILLE

| Match Stats | | |
|-------------|---------------------|-----|
| 3 | Saves | 6 |
| 7 | Attempts on target | 3 |
| 9 | Attempts off target | 12 |
| 46% | Possession | 54% |
| 9 | Corners | 7 |
| 1 | Offsides | 0 |
| 12 | Fouls committed | 6 |

play in the 29th minute. James Virgili went on another of his mazy dribbles and the ball fell invitingly to Ryan Griffiths on his right foot. He bent a curling effort from the edge of the box that Eugene Galekovic skilfully tipped over the bar. From then on the home side started to control the flow of the contest and they were now looking the side likely to take the lead. The Jets should have taken the lead in the 41st minute. Virgili was again heavily involved after another brilliant run. He laid the ball on a plate for Griffiths on the brink of the 6 yard box. He somehow scuffed his shot tamely which

was blocked by a combination of Iain Fyfe and Galekovic. The ball squirmed out to James Brown whose tame effort was easily cleared to safety. In a blow to the Jets their marquee man Emile Heskey was forced off at the break due to a suspected grade one quad injury and youngster Adam Taggart was given the opportunity as his replacement. Moments later, Griffiths had the first chance of the second half on 47 minutes. He quickly swivelled onto his right foot from the edge of the area and bent an effort for the bottom corner that was marvellously tipped around the post

by Galekovic. Eugene Galekovic was again the star man for Adelaide in the 58th minute. Griffiths slipped a delightful ball in behind the Adelaide defence straight into the path of Taggart. He took a touch to control before sliding his shot for the bottom corner, only denied brilliantly by the feet of the Adelaide captain. In a sign that the game had changed complexion, it took Adelaide until the 79th minute to register their first shot of the second half. Marcelo Carrusca bent an audacious free kick from 25 yards that bent harmlessly wide of Birighitti's goal.

As the game entered stoppage time both sides increased their urgency in an effort to find the goal to decide the game. They were both unable to create any further chances and both teams had to settle for a draw. The draw keeps Adelaide in 2nd place just behind leaders the Central Coast Mariners and looking forward to the visit of Perth Glory next weekend. The Jets remain just outside the play off positions and welcome the defending champions the Brisbane Roar to Hunter Stadium next weekend.



Dario Vidosic (Adelaide United) is too hot to handle for Ruben Zadkovic (Jets). Photo: BEN NEVILLE



Adelaide United's Evan Kostopoulos gives his marker the skip.. Photo: BEN NEVILLE



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Melbourne Victory



2

Wellington Phoenix



0

Match Details

Melbourne Victory 2 (Marcos Flores 43', Marco Rojas 52')
Wellington Phoenix 0
 Venue: AAMI Park, Melbourne
 Referee: Ben Williams
 Attendance: 18,609

Melbourne Victory: 39. Nathan Coe, 3. Adama Traore, 5. Mark Milligan, 9. Marcos Flores, 10. Archie Thompson, 11. Marco Rojas (26. Andrew Nabbout 85'), 13. Diogo Ferreira, 14. Billy Celeski (25. Luke O'dea 70'), 21. Spase Dilevski (6. Leigh Broxham 60'), 23. Adrian Leijer, 24. Nick Ansell

Unused Substitute: 1. Tando Velaphi
 Yellow Cards: Nick Ansell 45', Billy Celeski 65'
 Red Cards: Nil

Wellington Phoenix: 1. Mark Paston, 3. Tony Lochhead, 7. Leo Bertos, 9. Benjamin Totori, 10. Stein Huysegems (15. Cameron Lindsay 69'), 11. Jeremy Brockie, 16. Louis Fenton (6. Alex Smith 77'), 17. Vince Lia, 18. Ben Sigmund, 21. Dani Sanchez, 22. Andrew Durante

Unused Substitutes: 5. Michael Boxall, 30. Griffin McMaster
 Yellow Cards: Louis Fenton 24', Leo Bertos 69'
 Red Cards: Nil

Flores Finally Finds The Target For Victory

By Roy Hay

Melbourne Victory gained two points on Adelaide City and three from the game as it comfortably accounted for Wellington Phoenix by two goals to nil at AAMI Park on Saturday night. Earlier Adelaide had played a scoreless draw with Newcastle Jets.

Victory was without two of its influential midfielders Gui Finkler and Jonathan Bru, but regained Mark Milligan and Diogo Ferreira, while Spase Dilevski retained his place after an excellent goal and game last week. Phoenix had Paul Ifill and Manny Muscat sidelined.

Victory dominated the opening half and might have scored several times but for excellent defence and interceptions by the Phoenix defenders, and, it has to be said, because the home team tried to pass the ball into the net when an earlier shot might have been more effective. For Phoenix the main threat came from the jinking, high-speed runs by young Benjamin Totori who gave Nick Ansell and Adama Traore lots of trouble.

But Totori did not have a lot of support as Jeremy Brockie was ineffective and of course Ifill was missing. Victory might have gone ahead several times, with the closest coming when Marco Rojas set up Archie Thompson who went down in the goal area under challenge by keeper Mark Paston. Referee Ben Williams saw no infringement however and the Socceroo striker had to get up and play one.

With a couple of minutes to go to the interval, Victory finally made its pressure tell when Marco Rojas took the ball down the left and crossed low and hard. Spase Dilevski got a partial deflection on the ball which fell into the path

of Marco Flores who finished sweetly.

The second half was only seven minutes old when Victory doubled its lead. Again Rojas was involved in setting up the move with a corner kick which found its way to skipper Adrian Leijer whose shot hit the post and Rojas popped home the rebound for his tenth goal of the season, bringing him level with Daniel McBreen at the top of the goalscoring chart. In 62 minutes Victory put together a wonderful passing movement from deep in its own half which had the Phoenix players twisting and turning as they tried to stop its progress. But they could do nothing about the final effort from Mark Milligan which beat the keeper but came back off the near post. Five minutes later Milligan got free again from a pass by Thompson and though he took great care with his precise shot it narrowly missed the far post on this occasion. Billy Celeski was having a wonderful game in midfield at the fulcrum of most of Victory's best moves but he was booked for a spoiling tackle in 65 minutes and came off to rousing applause five minutes later. Luke O'Dea came on and gradually found his feet in an attacking role. Adam Traore had by now reduced the threat of Totori to become an auxiliary attacker for Victory and might have scored from a Rojas pass, then shot narrowly wide after a strong run of his own. Substitute Cameron Lindsay stung Nathan Coe's hands with a fierce shot late in the game and Jeremy Brockie put a header over the bar, but Victory could have added to its score several times as well.

By now Victory was in total control and Ange Postecoglou allowed himself the luxury of conducting the singing and chanting by the Victory fans as the clock ran down.

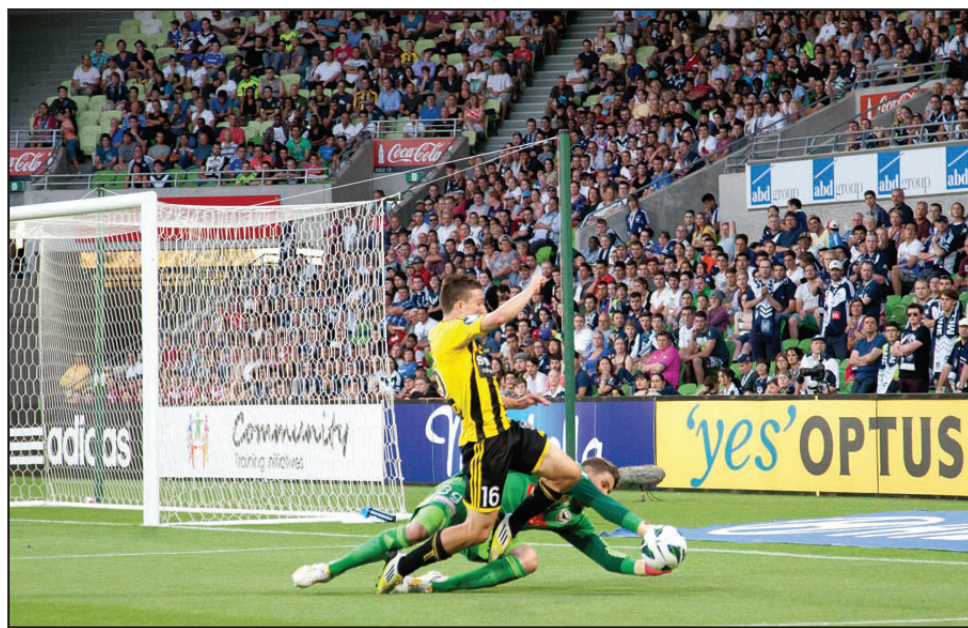


| Match Stats | | | |
|-------------|---------------------|-----|--|
| 3 | Saves | 1 | |
| 3 | Attempts on target | 3 | |
| 10 | Attempts off target | 7 | |
| 50% | Possession | 50% | |
| 4 | Corners | 4 | |
| 2 | Offsides | 4 | |
| 11 | Fouls committed | 17 | |

Marcos Flores does the trick for Melbourne Victory, much to the delight of its partisan crowd. Photo: ANITA MILAS



Marco Rojas attempts a bit of South American magic with this free-kick. Photo: ANITA MILAS



Victory keeper Nathan Coe does well to get to the ball before Alex Smith arrives in the penalty box. Photo: ANITA MILAS

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Perth Glory



2

Sydney FC



2

Match Details

Perth Glory 2 (Smeltz 39, 80)
Sydney FC 2 (Culina 63, Ryall 82)
 nib Stadium
 Referee: Kris Griffiths-Jones
 Crowd: 9,817

Sydney FC: 20. Vedran Janjetovic, 2. Sebastian Ryall, 6. Jason Culina, 7. Brett Emerton, 10. Alessandro Del Piero, 12. Blake Powell (16. Joel Chianese '65), 18. Trent McClenahan, 22. Ali Abbas, 23. Rhyan Grant, 26. Peter Triantis, 28. Aaron Calver.

Subs Not Used: 15. Terry McFlynn, 25. Daniel Petkovski, 33. Matthew Nash (gk).
 Yellow Cards: McClenahan 57, Emerton 88.

Perth Glory: 1. Danny Vukovic, 5. Steve Pantelidis, 7. Jacob Burns, 8. Dean Heffernan, 9. Shane Smeltz, 10. Liam Miller, 12. Ryo Nagai (17. Chris Harrold '64), 13. Travis Dodd, 14. Steve McGarry, 19. Joshua Risdon, 21. Scott Jamieson.

Subs Not Used: 6. Nick Ward, 15. Brandon O'Neal, 30. Lewis Italiano (gk).
 Yellow Cards: Heffernan 56, Vukovic 67, Harrold 87.

By Gareth Morgan

A spectacular brace from Shane Smeltz was not enough to earn three points for Perth Glory on Saturday night as Sydney FC twice came from behind to claim a share of the spoils in a pulsating 2-2 draw.

The home side dominated much of the first-half, but the under-strength visitors forced their way back into the contest after the break and duly maintained their impressive record at nib Stadium courtesy of a header from Jason Culina and a close-range finish from Seb Ryall.

The pre-match buzz may have been created by the first ever appearance in the west of Alessandro Del Piero, but ultimately he was overshadowed by Glory's own marquee man, Smeltz.

The Kiwi international showed no sign of the injury concerns that had troubled him in the run-up to the game, doubling his goal tally for the season with two memorable finishes of the very highest quality.

Sydney's goals meanwhile, were less spectacular, but coach Frank Farina will have taken plenty of positives from the heart shown by what was a makeshift, largely inexperienced side.

His counterpart Ian Ferguson opted to tinker with his midfield shape, pushing Liam Miller into a more advanced role alongside Steven McGarry and the switch paid immediate dividends as Glory seized the initiative right from the off, playing at a noticeably higher tempo than in recent weeks to pen the visitors into their own half for long periods.

Travis Dodd had an effort ruled out for off-side as early as the 9th minute and although the Sky Blues did create a half-chance of their own shortly afterwards, Jason Culina skied over the bar from the edge of the box and the home goal was barely threatened again before the break.

Instead, the visitors found themselves battling desperately to keep a rampant Glory side at bay, with Ryo Nagai giving former Glory man Trent



Blake Powell (Sydney FC) and Liam Miller (Perth Glory) refuse to give an inch. Photo: CRAIG ECCLES

McClenahan a torrid time down the left and Dodd equally lively on the opposite flank.

As the pressure from the home side grew, Sky Blues 'keeper Vedran Janjetovic was called upon to make two smart stops in the space of a minute shortly after the half-hour mark.

Firstly, the 25-year-old went full length to tip Scott Jamieson's low drive around the post and he then showed great reflexes to foil Steven McGarry at point-blank range from the resulting corner.

But just as Frank Farina's strugglers looked set to hang on until the break, Smeltz produced a timely reminder of why he is the A-League's record goalscorer.

Josh Risdon whipped in a searching cross from the right and the prolific

frontman got enough power on his glancing header to leave Janjetovic helpless and bag his third goal of the campaign.

Having been so dominant in the opening stanza, Glory appeared a little impatient to get the job done early in the second, allowing the visitors to create several promising opportunities on the break.

Forced to chase the game, Sydney pushed extra bodies forward, with Del Piero finally starting to exert some influence for the first time in the contest.

And shortly after the hour-mark, they got their reward.

Brett Emerton led a sweeping break down the right flank, whipped in an inch-perfect cross for fellow-Socceroo Culina and he crashed

an unstoppable diving header past Vukovic to claim his first goal of the campaign.

Visibly lifted by their leveller, the Sky Blues continued their resurgence and came close to getting their noses in front when substitute Joel Chianese teed up Culina, but this time the former Gold Coast man screwed his close-range effort over the bar.

Glory's response to that let-off was to create a decent chance of their own, a neat one-two between Dodd and Burns allowing the skipper to get in a shot which Janjetovic parried around his left post.

As the game ticked its final ten minutes, the tension grew palpably both on the field and in the stands, prompting Smeltz to produce his second piece of magic for the night.

Dodd was the creator, tormenting the visitors' defence with a slalom-ing run across the top of the box before finding his fellow-attacker who curled a glorious first-time effort into the top corner of the net.

Glory's first victory over the Sky Blues since November 2009 seemed imminent, but to their credit, Farina's men again clawed their way back.

With just eight minutes remaining, Vukovic failed to gather a deep free-kick bent in by Del Piero and Seb Ryall gleefully lashed home the loose ball.

Dodd then fired narrowly over the bar as Glory desperately tried to restore their advantage for a third time, but the visitors hung on to secure a battling and much-needed point.

| | Match Stats | |
|-----|---------------------|-----|
| 1 | Saves | 6 |
| 8 | Attempts on target | 3 |
| 10 | Attempts off target | 7 |
| 53% | Possession | 47% |
| 8 | Corners | 4 |
| 3 | Offsides | 3 |
| 16 | Fouls committed | 17 |



Perth Glory's Shane Smeltz (far right) manages to guide the ball past Sydney FC custodian Vedran Janjelovic to open the scoring. Photo: CRAIG ECCLES



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Heart Hang On To Sneak A Top Six Spot

By Daniel Quinn

The Melbourne Heart have won consecutive games for the first time this season with a thrilling 3-2 victory over resilient Brisbane Roar side.

Heart looked to be on the way to a comfortable win thanks to an early 3-0 lead after goals from David Williams, Josip Tadic and Fred, but the game was completely turned around on 67 minutes when Williams was sent off.

The Roar took only six minutes to hit the back of the net with two goals inside two minutes from Besart Berisha.

Brisbane started the brighter of the two sides with some brilliant one-touch passing involving Thomas Broich, Mitch Nichols and Massimo Murococa, while Berisha started in the unusual position of the left wing as Broich played up top. The Roar also could have taken an early lead as an Erik Paartalu header was palmed into the side netting by Heart gloveman Andrew Redmayne.

But the Heart took the lead through Williams, who started instead of Golgol Mebrahtu who took a place on the bench after pulling up sore against Newcastle.

Richard Garcia delightfully found Williams making a superb run down the left channel, before the former North Queensland Fury forward calmly slotted past Roar 'keeper Michael Theo.

Matt Thompson in Heart's central midfield was struggling with the accuracy of his passes, but the Red and White's front three weren't giving the 30-



| M | Match Stats | B |
|-----|---------------------|-----|
| 0 | Saves | 2 |
| 6 | Attempts on target | 10 |
| 4 | Attempts off target | 8 |
| 46% | Possession | 54% |
| 3 | Corners | 9 |
| 0 | Offsides | 2 |
| 14 | Fouls committed | 12 |



Melbourne Heart's Fred manages to squeeze the ball home and help the home side race to an early 3-0 lead. Inset: The Brazilian playmaker gives thanks above. Photo: ANITA MILAS

year-old any options forcing Thompson to pass back or sideways.

The Roar were finding it hard to get through a stubborn Heart defence that included one of the finds of the season in Patrick Gerhardt.

On the counter the Heart doubled their advantage as Michael Marrone powered down the right flank and fed a terrific ball through to Tadic who neatly slotted through Theo's legs. However the Croatian looked

to have been in an offside position, but the goal still stood.

Brisbane Coach Mike Mulvey made a half-time change in hope the Roar could cut the deficit as Nick Fitzgerald replaced Murococa and Broich was moved in to play behind Berisha.

Shortly after the resumption it was 3-0 for the hosts. Aziz Behich burst down the left wing before his cross arrived at the feet of Fred before the Brazilian's strike hit the back

of the net despite Theo getting a hand onto the ball.

Fred almost nodded the fourth for the Red and White, although Theo pulled off an amazing save to deny the Heart Captain.

Seconds later Williams, Heart's first goalscorer, was given a straight red card for a late challenge on Ivan Franjic.

On 73 minutes, six minutes after Williams was sent off, Fred brought down Halloran in the box and the referee Alan Mil-

liner pointed to the spot, before Berisha sent Redmayne the wrong way and slotted into the bottom corner.

The frenetic period continued as the Roar pushed and snatched their second through Berisha as the Albanian finishes from an acute angle.

The Roar pushed late in search of an equaliser and could have snatched a point, but Mitch Nichols headed over in stoppage-time.



Josip Tadic clears the advertsing boards after notching up his fifth goal of the season, and celebrates accordingly with Richard Garcia. Photo: ANITA MILAS



Action aplenty at AAMI park as Erik Paartalu uses his mighyt to get the better of Josip Tadic in the aerial department. Photo: ANITA MILAS

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West Sydney



0

CC Mariners



2

Match Details

Western Sydney Wanderers 0
Central Coast Mariners 2 (McBreen 41', 90+5')

Parramatta Stadium, Parramatta
Attendance: 16,387
Referee: Chris Beath

Western Sydney Wanderers: 1. Ante Covic (Gk), 2. Shannon Cole (15. Reece Cairra 80'), 4. Nikolai Topor-Stanley (c), 6. Jerome Polenz, 10. Aaron Mooy, 13. Joseph Gibbs (7. Labinot Haliti 67'), 14. Kwabena Appiah-Kubi (11. Tarek Elrich 67'), 18. Iacopo La Rocca, 19. Mark Bridge, 21. Shinji Ono, 23. Jason Trifiro

Substitutes not used: 20. Jerrad Tyson (Gk)
Yellow cards: Polenz, Trifiro x2, La Rocca
Red cards: Trifiro

Central Coast Mariners: 1. Mathew Ryan (Gk), 2. Daniel McBreen, 3. Joshua Rose, 4. Pedj Bojic, 5. Zachary Anderson, 11. Oliver Bozanic (13. Brent Griffiths 90'), 14. Michael McGlinchey (c), 16. Trent Sainsbury, 18. Nick Montgomery (7. John Hutchinson 75'), 21. Mile Sterjovski, 23. Adam Kwasnik (9. Bernie Ibini 62')

Substitutes not used: 20. Justin Pasfield (Gk)
Yellow cards: Sainsbury, Bojic, Montgomery
Red cards: Nil

By Ben O'Neill

A BRILLIANT brace from Daniel McBreen on his return from suspension secured Central Coast Mariners three vital Hyundai A-League points against Western Sydney Wanderers on Sunday.

McBreen netted in the 41st minute and again deep into added time nearing the end of the contest to ensure Graham Arnold's men consolidated their place atop the A-League standings with a 2-0 triumph.

16,387 vociferous fans packed Parramatta Stadium for the early evening kick-off and the two teams didn't disappoint the masses, putting on a superb show of attacking and enterprising football despite the hot conditions.

The first 45 provided enthralling action for the strong crowd to savour, with the first shot of the game coming from the boot of Jason Trifiro. Trifiro would later be sent off for picking up two yellow cards.

McBreen and Pedj Bojic both missed the target with difficult chances soon after before Japanese creative Shinji Ono nearly crafted an opportunity for Joey Gibbs with an incisive pass from the right side. Ono's delightful delivery just missed the onrushing Gibbs in the Mariners' penalty box.

Wearing the captain's armband for the second match in a row, Michael McGlinchey was looking dangerous for the yellow and navy and the New Zealand international midfielder nearly handed his team the lead in the 37th minute. After breaking down the right McGlinchey cracked a shot from the edge of the area centimetres past Ante Covic's right post.

Just four minutes later the competition's top goal-getter, McBreen, fired home his 11th goal of the campaign. Combining intelligently with Adam Kwasnik, McBreen weaved his way through the Wanderers' defence before sending a clinical finish beyond Covic.

Tony Popovic's team returned from the sheds after the interval clearly motivated to prove themselves

Mariner Daniel McBreen spoils the Parramatta party with a double worthy of the three points. Photo: ALI ERHAN

against the A-League's top-placed team, and to their credit the home side managed to make a number of forays into the Mariners' final third. Ono went close just five minutes after the restart, his ferocious effort from close range blocked away by the perfectly positioned Bojic on the goal line.

But the men from 'Wanderland' were reduced to ten men in the 54th minute when referee Chris Beath sent Trifiro for an early bath following a dangerous foul on Nick Montgomery, making their task of overturning

the one-goal deficit a more difficult proposition.

Arnold introduced Bernie Ibini into the match for Kwasnik with 30 minutes remaining and instantly Ibini nearly helped Central Coast double their advantage. Ibini's endeavour helped fashion a chance for McBreen, however the former Falkirk striker's shot was deflected away for a corner.

The game was beginning to stretch considerably with Wanderers hunting for an equaliser and Arnold's team seeking to punish the red and blacks

for sending too many men forward.

But despite creating a series of half chances to restore parity to the clash, Popovic's men couldn't manage to force Coast custodian Mathew Ryan into a save of any remarkable note, with their finishing in front of the red and black bloc letting them down.

Deep into injury time, McBreen made the most of an opportunity that fell kindly into his path, sending a curling left foot shot beyond a Covic for his 12th goal of what is proving to be a remarkable season for the 35-

year-old.

The victory over Wanderers consolidated Central Coast's place atop the Hyundai A-League table, generating a four-point buffer over second-placed Adelaide United.


Central Coast Mariners play their next match away to Melbourne Victory on Saturday 12 January at Aurora Stadium, Launceston.

The team returns to Bluetongue Stadium on Saturday 19 January against Newcastle Jets.

All eyes at the ready as sharpshooter Daniel McBreen (Mariners) prepares to take position. Photo: ALI ERHAN

High-flying action from the top of the table clash. Photo: GREG SEATON

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9

PICS OF ROUND 15

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Andrew Redmayne and Aziz Behich get ready to get jiggy with it, as Jason Hoffman does the two-step. Photo: ANITA MILAS



Roar captain Matt Smith leads his troops out onto AAMI Park. Photo: ANITA MILAS



Perth was abuzz with Del Piero fever and a sell-out crowd at nib Stadium was treated to four goals being shared. Photo: CRAIG ECCLES



Matchday helpers prepare to unfurl the Hyundai banner at Victory v Phoenix. PHOTO: ANITA MILAS



Besart Berisha can't wait to get the ball back to the the restart after his double had hearts fluttering. Photo: ANITA MILAS



Wanderers coach Tony Popovic keeps on punching on... Photo: GREG SEATON



Colour, smoke and action was the order of the day at the Wanderers v Mariners blockbuster. PHOTO: GREG SEATON

Melbourne Victory CEO Anthony DiPietro does the honours with the showbags for the African footballer guests. Photo: ANITA MILAS



The African Somali Football Association pose for the money shot at AAMI Park. Photo: ANITA MILAS





Adelaide Utd Line Up

- Eugene Galekovic (gk) (c)
- Osama Malik
- Jon McKain
- Iain Fyfe
- Cassio
- Zenon Caravella
- Dario Vidosic
- Bruce Djite
- Antony Golec
- Cameron Watson
- Daniel Bowles
- Iain Ramsay
- Fabian Barbiero
- Paul Izzo (gk)
- Jeronimo Neumann
- Evan Kostopoulos
- Awer Mabil

*two to be omitted

In: Osama Malik (promoted), Jon McKain (promoted), Awer Mabil (promoted from NYL)
Out: Marcelo Carrusca (groin – 2-3 weeks)
Unavailable: Nigel Boogaard (hamstring – 1 week), Fabio Ferreira (groin – 2-3 weeks)



Victory Line Up

- Tando VELAPHI (GK)
- Matthew FOSCHINI
- Adama TRAORE
- Mark MILLIGAN
- Leigh BROXHAM
- Jonathan BRU
- Marcos FLORES
- Archie THOMPSON
- Marco ROJAS
- Billy CELESKI
- Theo MARKELIS
- Jimmy JEGGO
- Spase DILEVSKI
- Adrian LEIJER
- Nick ANSELL
- Luke O'DEA
- Andrew NABOUT
- Nathan COE (GK)

*three to be omitted

In: 2. Matthew FOSCHINI, 16. Theo MARKELIS, 17. Jimmy JEGGO (all promoted)

Out: Nil

Unavailable: 7. Gui FINKLER (knee)

Adelaide United v Perth Glory

By Luca Cetta

Perth Glory will be aiming to return to the winners list but in order to do so must overcome a poor away record, while Adelaide United are looking to keep pace with leaders Central Coast.

John Kosmina's side controlled large parts of the opening stanza last Saturday in Newcastle, but were unable to make their advantage count. In the end it took a brilliant Eugene Galekovic save from Adam Taggart's effort to ensure it remained scoreless. Kosmina felt Adelaide could have walked away with more than just a point. "You could say we could be happy with a point coming back from a place like Newcastle, against a team that is struggling and desperate...But do we set our standards higher and say we could have knocked them off in the first half-hour and didn't and maybe we threw away two points?" Yet United remain well poised to finish high up the ladder. Currently four points behind the Mariners, they enjoy a three point buffer over third-placed Melbourne Victory. Ten points separate the Reds from their weekend adversary. At home Adelaide have proven tough to beat. They have won six of eight Hindmarsh Stadium clashes this term and conceded just six goals, although they were forced to come from behind to

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Referee: Peter Green

The Odds

AUFC 2.20
Draw 3.50
Glory 3.40

Travel-weary Perth face stern Adelaide test

draw when Glory last visited. Marcelo Carrusca has been ruled out because of an adductor tear, with Fabian Barbiero and Zenon Caravella in line to replace the Argentine. Nigel Boogaard is also absent, while Fabio Ferreira is in doubt due to a groin complaint. Perth will be disappointed to have twice surrendered the lead at home against Sydney last weekend in an entertaining encounter. Shane Smeltz gave Glory a half-time advantage, only for Jason Culina to level proceedings just past the hour. The Kiwi international roared back into form with his second ten minutes from time, but Sebastian Ryll ensured a 2-2

draw just two minutes later. The fifth-placed Glory will aim to strengthen their Finals aspirations this weekend. Given they and bottom club Sydney are separated by just five points, Perth cannot afford to give points away cheaply.

Coach Ian Ferguson remains confident, despite Perth picking up just two points from a possible nine. "We're still in the race. There's a long way to go and still a lot of points to be won and lost. Everybody's beating everybody and as you can see, there are no easy games."

To aid their chances they will need to improve away form.

Perth have won just once, thanks to Steven McGarry's Christmas cracker in Brisbane. Aside from that and the draw secured in Adelaide, Glory have lost five times on the road.

Defender Bas van den Brink returns from suspension, while Evan Berger and Michael Thwaite remain in the treatment room. Going by the form guide Adelaide will be hot favourites to claim all three points. Yet against a Glory side which has caused problems in the past, the Reds must be wary and at the top of their game.

Kiss of Death
AUFC 2-1 Glory



Glory Line Up

- Danny Vukovic (gk)
- Bas van den Brink
- Steve Pantelidis
- Nick Ward
- Jacob Burns (c)
- Dean Heffernan
- Shane Smeltz
- Liam Miller
- Adrian Zahra
- Ryo Nagai
- Travis Dodd
- Steven McGarry
- Brandon O'Neill
- Chris Harold
- Jesse Makarounas
- Josh Risdon
- Scott Jamison
- Ndumba Makeche
- Lewis Italiano (gk)

*four to be omitted

In: 3.Bas van den Brink (returns from suspension), 11.Adrian Zahra, 18.Jesse Makarounas, 22.Ndumba Makeche (all promoted)

Outs: Nil
Unavailable: 16.Evan Berger (hamstring – indefinite), 23.Michael Thwaite (calf – 2 weeks)



Mariners Line Up

- Mathew Ryan (Gk)
- Daniel McBreen
- Joshua Rose
- Pedj Bojic
- Zachary Anderson
- Patrick Zwaanswijk
- John Hutchinson (c)
- Bernie Ibini
- Oliver Bozanic
- Brent Griffiths
- Michael McGlinchey
- Anthony Caceres
- Nick Montgomery
- Justin Pasfield (Gk)
- Mile Sterjovski
- Adam Kwasnik

*one to be omitted

In: 6. Patrick Zwaanswijk (returns from injury)

Out: 16. Trent Sainsbury (suspended - 1 week)

Unavailable: 10. Tomas Rogic (suspended - 1 week), 22. James Oates (ankle - 2 months)

Melbourne Victory v CC Mariners

By Andrew Bishara

The game of the round? When you look across the other games over the week, this is the one that stands out. First versus third. Arnie versus Angie. Defensive solitude versus attacking impetus. Championship favourites versus Championship hopefuls.

There was nothing at fault when the Mariners collected the three points against Western Sydney. Melbourne too, dominated against the Wellington Phoenix. This is the game when we'll see how far Postecoglou's boys and methods have come.

Postecoglou's 'false 9' formation is evident this season, with Marco Flores dropping deep from his role as striker to collect the ball, adding another creative spark in the midfield. Problem is, Flores is no 'striker'; he's a creator, a number 10 and that's Gus Finkler's role.

It's not coincidental that Flores' best game happened to be when Brazilian playmaker Gus Finkler wasn't playing. Postecoglou might be trying to build a team layered with creativity, but both Finkler and Flores are in the similar mould.

With Finkler out for the season, the pressure will be on Flores. Thankfully, his form has been overshadowed by his teammates. Marco Rojas is there, probably one of the players of the season. So too is Mark Milligan, whose importance to the Victory has never



ABC Radio Coverage - Updates only

The Odds

Victory 3.00
Draw 3.40
Mariners 2.45

Join the conversation on Twitter using the hash-tag #MVvCCM

Referee: Jarred Gillett

Victory look to dispose of Mariners

been higher. His midfielder partner, Billy Celeski hasn't got much of the credit, with Postecoglou admitting,"He has been outstanding for a while". It's these individuals that are keeping the Victory alive.

The team will stay the same, the radical formation and so will his way of playing. Postecoglou won't change his methods. That though, might be the problem.

Because Ange's way of playing is a joy for a team playing on the counter. And that team is Arnie's and no team is better. Give the Mariners an ache of space, they will exploit it and punish you. So well drilled at their tactics and style,

everyone from midfielder Michael McGlinchey to full back Josh Rose knows their roles, and performs it consistently.

Just look at the performance against the Wanderers. Before Western Sydney was reduced to 10 men, they had more possession, more chances, but the Mariners held the lead. The week before, against Perth Glory: same style, same result. Mariners 1-nil.

Arnold, like Ange, won't change his way. He has a full team ahead of him. Tom Rogic might be suspended, but he will be staying with the Mariners. So too will Matt Ryan, who decide against going overseas. The man of the hour

though is Daniel McBreen. At 35, he's showing that old an old-dog-can-learn-new-tricks idealism, by leading the goal charts with 12.

So, what about this weekend? Arnie knows how to play against Angie. He'll make his men invite pressure on themselves before springing forward. Ange will bring the pressure onto the Mariners. Deciding a winner will be tricky. Both teams are at the peak of their powers. The Mariners are the team of the moment. The Victory trying to close the gap. A draw to make both Angie and Arnie happy.

Kiss of Death
Victory 1-1 Mariners

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Jets Line Up

1. Ben Kennedy
2. Scott Neville
7. James Brown
8. Ruben Zadkovich
9. Emile Heskey
11. Connor Chapman
12. Josh Brillante
13. Sam Gallaway
14. Taylor Regan
15. Craig Goodwin
16. Jobe Wheelhouse
17. James Virgili
18. Jacob Pepper
19. Michael Bridges
20. Mark Birighitti
22. Adam Taggart
23. Ryan Griffiths
25. Mitch Cooper
- *three to be omitted

In: Jobe Wheelhouse (returns from injury), Scott Neville, Mitch Cooper (promoted)

Out: Nil

Unavailable: Josh Mitchell (knee), Ben Kantarovski (knee), Dominik Ritter (hamstring)

Newcastle Jets v Brisbane Roar

By Shaun Dyas

The Newcastle Jets face-off against the Brisbane Roar this weekend in the A-League at Hunter Stadium in the midst of an injury crisis.

Marquee striker Emile Heskey is in severe doubt for the game after suffering a hip flexor injury in the previous rounds draw against Adelaide United.

Exacerbating this is the likely unavailability of stand-in captain Ruben Zadkovich who went down at training on Tuesday morning with a knee problem.

This is not the ideal situation for the Jets as they prepare to welcome the two-time defending A-League champions to Hunter Stadium for the first time this season.

Luckily for the Jets, Brisbane is in the midst of their own issues as they attempt to settle into life under new coach and former Gold Coast United mentor Mike Mulvey.

This has led to some inconsistent performances, including their last round 3-2 defeat in Melbourne against the Heart.

The score line flattered the visitors on that afternoon as they were down 3-0 before the sending off of Heart winger David Williams allowed them to add some respectability to the score line. Newcastle may be forced to rush back captain Jobe Wheelhouse straight into the line-up even

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though he has missed the last couple of months with his own injury issues.

He is one of the few options left to Gary Van Egmond in the centre of the pitch as Ben Kantarovski is still at least out for another month due to injury.

How Wheelhouse goes in the engine room may well go a long way to deciding the outcome of the match. Brisbane will play their up-tempo style of possession football and it will be up to the Jets to be able to cope with that effectively whilst providing their own threat. Adam Taggart will also have a crucial role to play. He will start as

Sat Jan 12 Hunter Stadium 7:45pm

Referee: Strebre Delovski

Injury Ravaged Jets Welcome Desperate Roar

The Odds

Jets 3.20
Draw 3.50
Roar 2.25

Kiss of Death
Jets 1-0 Roar



Roar Line Up

1. Michael Theo (gk)
2. Matt Smith (c)
3. Shane Stefanutto
4. Matt Jurman
5. Ivan Franjic
6. Erik Paartalu
7. Besart Berisha
8. Massimo Murdocca
11. Ben Halloran
15. James Donachie
17. Mitch Nichols
18. Luke Brattan
20. Matt Acton (gk)
21. James Meyer
22. Thomas Broich
24. Nick Fitzgerald
25. George Lambadaridis
- *two to be omitted

In: James Donachie (returns from suspension), Luke Brattan (promoted)

Out: Nil

Unavailable: Jack Hingert (hip injury – 4-6 weeks), Do Dong-Hyun (knee – 2-3 weeks), Henrique (hip injury – 1-2 weeks)



Phoenix Line Up

1. Mark Paston (GK)
3. Tony Lochhead
6. Alex Smith
7. Leo Bertos
9. Benjamin Totori
10. Stein Huysegems
11. Jeremy Brockie
12. Tyler Boyd
15. Cameron Lindsay
16. Louis Fenton
17. Vince Lia
18. Ben Sigmund
21. Dani Sanchez
22. Andrew Durante (C)
30. Griffin McMaster (GK)

In: 12. Tyler Boyd (returns from suspension)

Out: Michael Boxall (omitted)

Unavailable: 8. Paul Ifill (ankle injury 3-4 weeks), Manny Muscat (suspended – 1 week)

Wellington Phoenix v WS Wanderers

By Joe Gallagher

Western Sydney Wanderers and Wellington Phoenix have completely outdone their own expectations so far this season, but in completely dissimilar ways.

The Yellow Fever's high hopes have been all but quashed, while things could scarcely be running any smoother in Parramatta.

Last weekend Ricki Herbert became the A-League's most experienced coach, but there was little cause to celebrate. Still without a point in 2013, his Phoenix side look to reignite their campaign with a visit from resurgent Western Sydney Wanderers on Sunday.

Tony Popovic's side have been flying of late – a 2-0 setback against league-leading Central Coast a blip after a run of five games without defeat.

That unbeaten run began after a 1-0 loss in New Zealand's capital, a result for which the home side owe a great deal to the blustery windy weather.

Add to the equation the rising form of star recruit Shinji Ono, and Wellington will consider the Wanderers an altogether different prospect this time around.

Since that result – and with it, Wellington's most fortuitous goal this season – the Phoenix's fortunes have headed in the wrong direction. Of the 18 points available since that afternoon, Herbert's side have

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A-League's High Achievers Cross The Ditch

The Odds

Phoenix 2.40
Draw 3.40
WSW 2.80

picked up just four. That's hardly the form of a side who were touted as title challengers at the beginning of the campaign.

Herbert simply must target a good return from his next three matches: a trip to Sydney FC sandwiched by visits from the Wanderers and the Jets. Failure to profit from these match-ups might see the Phoenix slip further off the pace entering February.

They're still without the services of Paul Ifill, and midfielder Manny Muscat is suspended for a further two matches. Herbert's squad will be slightly strengthened, however, by the return of Tyler Boyd and the midweek signing of All White

Sun Jan 13 Westpac Stadium 2:30pm

Referee: Shaun Evans

Ian Hogg – though the latter is not cleared to play until next weekend. Whether Boyd returns to the starting lineup remains to be seen, with undoubted talent in Wellington's attacking set up still waiting to be fully harnessed.

On the other hand, Western Sydney – the very same Western Sydney who couldn't seem to buy a goal in the opening month of the season – now occupy a comfortable finals berth, and could rise as high as third by weekend's end.

Along with Ono, Popovic's attacking stocks have been reinforced this week by the signing of Rocky Visconte, who will challenge leading scorer Mark Bridge for a spot

in Popovic's starting eleven.

The difference might be – as it has been all too regularly this term – whether Wellington's backbone stands firm. Only twice this season have the New Zealand outfit failed to find the net, but only three times have they kept a clean sheet. Conditions will, surely, be more agreeable on this weekend than the last time these two met.

But if the Phoenix fail to pick up another three points, the pressure will well and truly be on – the next few weeks might be the key to their season.

Kiss of Death
Phoenix 1-0 WSW



Wanderers Line Up

1. Ante Covic (GK)
2. Shannon Cole
3. Adam D'Apuzo
4. Nikolai Topor-Stanley
5. Michael Beauchamp
6. Jerome Polenz
7. Labinot Haliti
8. Mateo Poljak
10. Aaron Mooy
11. Tarek Elrich
13. Joey Gibbs
14. Kwabena Appiah-Kubi
15. Reece Caira
17. Youssef Hersi
18. Iacopo La Rocca
19. Mark Bridge
20. Jerrad Tyson (GK)
21. Shinji Ono
- *three to be omitted

In: Youssef Hersi (returns from suspension), Michael Beauchamp (returns from suspension), Adam D'Apuzzo (promoted), Mateo Poljak (Promoted)

Out: 23. Jason Trifiro (suspended – 1 match)
Unavailable: Tahj Minniecon (foot - indefinite), Dino Kresinger (knee 2-3 weeks)

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SYDNEY FC

Sydney FC Line Up

2. Sebastian Ryall
 3. Fabio
 6. Jason Culina
 7. Brett Emerton
 10. Alessandro Del Piero
 12. Blake Powell
 15. Terry McFlynn
 16. Joel Chianese
 17. Terry Antonis
 18. Trent McClenahan
 20. Vedran Janjetovic (gk)
 21. Yairo Yau
 22. Ali Abbas
 23. Rhyan Grant
 26. Peter Triantis
 28. Aaron Calver
 33. Matthew Nash (gk)
- *two to be omitted

In: Fabio (returns from injury), Yairo Yau (returns from injury)

Out: Nil

Unavailable: Pascal Bosschaert (calf - 2 weeks), Ivan Necevski (ankle - 2 weeks), Nathan Sherlock (hamstring - 2 weeks)

Sydney FC v Melbourne Heart

Sun Jan 13 Allianz Stadium 5:00pm

By Magnus Lewington

Sydney FC start their first home match of the 2013 still struggling for consistency; remaining anchored to the bottom of the A-League table. Whilst Frank Farina's brief tenure since early December has thus far has yielded improved performances, Sydney desperately need to put some wins under their belt if they wish to play any part in the business end of the A-League calendar.

Their most recent match against the Melbourne Heart - the first for the Sky Blues after the removal of Ian Crook from the position of head coach - provided a dour 0-0 draw. Both sides will be keen to pick up more from Sunday's match, with Heart aiming to solidify their recent ascension to the top-6 and Sydney needing to cut the four point gap between them and qualification for this year's finals series. While a hard earned point away at Glory and a victory over league leaders the Central Coast Mariners have indicated positive movement for the Sky Blues, they clearly remain a work in progress with consistency and confidence seemingly difficult commodities to come by for Sydney's first A-League franchise.

As Farina stated this week to the football media, the match against Heart and the following fixture tackling Wellington Phoenix are pivotal to Sydney's hopes for the

Referee: Chris Beath

The Odds

SFC 2.50
Draw 3.50
Heart 2.90

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Early Season Six-Pointer!

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remainder of the season. With a fit Alessandro Del Piero and a side somewhat rejuvenated following their poor start to the 2012-13 season, Sydney's management has pinpointed these two games as key opportunities to pick up points and put pressure on mid-table teams. The Sky Blues will be bolstered by the return of striker Yairo Yau and defender Fabio from injury, Farina having openly stated the need for 6 points from the upcoming two matches in a season that he believes will be fought down to the wire.

Equally, the Heart will look to build on their positive recent form and further entrench their position

in the top 6. Crunch wins against Newcastle Jets and Brisbane Roar have dramatically improved their position on the table following a disappointing December for John Aloisi's team. Considering their upcoming fixtures against in-form outfits in the form of Adelaide United and Western Sydney Wanderer's, Heart will be hoping to take the maximum from an apparently dilapidated Sydney FC team. They will however have to do without suspended striker David Williams, as well as long term injured players Mate Dugandzic and Vince Grella.

Sunday's fixture will help clarify the short term trajectories of these

two teams as they seek to solidify or chase a position in this season's play-offs.

While neither has the opportunity at this point to challenge for the title or even a potential home-final, there is no doubt that even for bottom-dwellers Sydney there remains a possibility of qualification for the final rounds of the season. If this is to be achieved however a full return of points in upcoming fixtures is an absolute necessity.

Kiss of Death
SFC 2-2 Heart

MELBOURNE HEART



Heart Line Up

1. Clint Bolton (Gk)
 3. Cameron Edwards
 4. Simon Colosimo
 5. Fred (c)
 6. Patrick Gerhardt
 8. Matthew Thompson
 9. Dylan Macallister
 10. Josip Tadic
 11. Richard Garcia
 13. Jonatan Germano
 14. Golgol Mebrahtu
 16. Aziz Behich
 17. Jason Hoffman
 18. David Vrankovic
 19. Ben Garuccio
 20. Andrew Redmayne (GK)
 21. Steven Gray
 22. Nick Kalmar
 24. Sam Mitchinson
 25. Jeremy Walker
 26. Ersin Kaya
- *six to be omitted

Ins: 3. Cameron Edwards, 18. David Vrankovic, 19. Ben Garuccio, 21. Steven Gray, 22. Nick Kalmar, 24. Sam Mitchinson, 25. Jeremy Walker, 26. Ersin Kaya (all promoted)

Outs: 2. Michael Marrone (impending transfer), 15. David Williams (suspended - one match)

Unavailable: 23. Mate Dugandzic (broken foot - season) 31. Vince Grella (groin - undisclosed)

A-League Rewind



By Robert Di Fabio

This weekend, Melbourne Victory will play host to league leaders Central Coast Mariners in Tasmania. The highly anticipated fixture - which pits two of the competition's title favourites - will be played at Launceston's Aurora Stadium as part of Victory's and Football Federation Australia's push to widen the A-League's reach and appeal, beyond the current climate.

Victory's new found relationship with Football Federation Tasmania will see the Apple Isle's revamped State League known as the Victory League from the 2013 season, with the club committed to being the league's major sponsor. In addition, the club will seek to produce the next generation of stars in the state, with an eye at bringing the brightest talent through the club's youth system.

With all this put into consideration, it only makes sense for Victory, in tandem with the A-League to grow its brand outside

the current geographic locations in the league, and raise support for Australia's premier football competition.

Victory, since its inauguration in 2005 has been an avid supporter of Tasmanian football. For the next two years at least, the club will play a game in Launceston each season, further illustrating its commitment to the state.

In what is anticipated to be a grand success, a healthy crowd is expected to be present for Saturday's game. FFT chairman John Boulous is excited about Victory's presence in Tasmania, and also yearns to see the A-League showcased in Hobart once a season.

With all this in mind, Boulous admitted the ambition was still to have an A-League team situated in Tasmania. Currently, a working title recognised as Tasmania United FC is hopeful of gaining entry into the A-League. The proposed club has its own website, along with a presence on social media - Facebook and Twitter.

Expansion may not be on FFA's mind at the moment; however Boulous is confident the Tasmanian public would get behind its very own local club.

"That's the aspiration [to have a Tasmanian team]," Boulous said. "But it's certainly a way off. In



The announcement of the Melbourne Victory Tasmanian State League made back in July at KGV Park by John Boulous (left), CEO of FFT, Sean Collins (centre), FFT President, and Richard Wilson (Managing Director of Melbourne Victory FC). Photo by Walter Pless

talking to the FFA, the league is embedded for a while, but the Tasmanian Government are of a similar opinion to us in that we want to get the local game strong, get a strong relationship with an A-League club - which we have now with Victory - and get a program of games down

here so we can help create hype. "Who knows then where we can go from there."

With the A-League's calamitous expansion history - which has already seen North Queensland Fury and Gold Coast United go under in quick succession - FFA is understandably hesitant to

expand the competition in the short-term, without the due research, resources, and sound financial support.

The governing body's primary objective is to have a financially stable competition, which includes a strong 10-team league. With the new Media deal

She's Apples mate, as football fever hits Tasmania

in place from next season - a four-year, \$160 million deal - the landscape of Australian football has never looked healthier.

Expansion may not be in FFA's mind-set at present, although there's reason to feel a sense of optimism at what is transpiring down in Tasmania. With the right government, corporate and financial support, there's no reason why a Tasmanian A-League team wouldn't be feasible in the medium to long-term future.

With no other major sporting competitors in the state - with the exception of cricket's six-week Big Bash League - there's reason to believe the Tasmanian public would get behind their very own football team.

The obvious dilemma - where to base the team, in Launceston or Hobart? It's no easy answer, although a possible alternative could be to split a number of games between the two cities, truly embracing the term 'United' in its name.

While there's no A-League team based in Tasmania, Victory is certainly leaving a lasting legacy in a state starved of professional football. This weekend's clash between the Victory and Mariners is set to be an exciting encounter, let's hope the local football community turns up in great numbers.

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ADELAIDE UNITED FC



SEASON 2012/13



Top row (from left to right): Iain Fyfe, Nigel Boogaard, Antony Golec, Daniel Bowles, Dario Vidosic, Osama Malik.

Middle row: Sean Tagg (High Performance Manager), Peter Blazincic (Goalkeeper Coach), Bruce Djite, Jon McKain, Cameron Watson, Paul Izzo, Sergio van Dijk, Evan Kostopoulos, Marcelo Carrusca, Michael Valkanis (Assistant Coach), John Kosmina (Head Coach).

Front row: Cassio, Fabian Barbiero, Jeronimo Neumann, Fabio Ferreira, Eugene Galekovic, Jake Barker-Daish, Iain Ramsay, Zenon Caravella, Jacob Melling, Teeboy Kamara.

Planet Football

Qatar



By Alvaro Rodriguez

NAME: Togo
CAPITAL: Lomé
POPULATION: (2009 approx.) 6,619,000
CONFEDERATION: CAF
INTERNATIONAL HONOURS: N/A
FIFA WORLD RANKING: 73rd
AFRICAN NATIONS CUP APPEARANCES: 1972, 1984, 1998-2002, 2006, 2013
WORLD CUP APPEARANCES: 2006

WHO ARE YA?

The Togolese Republic is situated in West Africa, bordered by Ghana, Benin and Burkina Faso. Its history dates back to the 11th Century, when the region began being settled by a number of nomadic Sub-Saharan tribes and clans. It was in the 16th Century however when the European powers pillaged the region for resources and people for the slave trade, shipping these cruelled souls to the New World - an inhumane practice which continued for the next three centuries.

In 1884 - decades after the abolition of slavery by all of Europe's colonial powers, and the establishment of the African sovereign state of Liberia as a homeland for former slaves from the Americas - Germany annexed what was then known as Togoland, administering it until WWI when British forces from the nearby Gold Coast colony (now Ghana) invaded and seized one part of it - the other was duly snapped up by the French.



Emmanuel Adebayor in action for Togo before his brief retirement from international football.

In-between the World Wars the two intrusive powers administered their separate halves of the former German possession, until they were awarded UN Trust Territory status after WWII. In 1957 the British half of Togoland voted to join with newly-independent Ghana, leaving French Togoland within the French sphere until 1960 when she won independence. The new republic was thrown into turmoil by the assassination of her first president Sylvanus Olympio in 1963, and a military junta assumed the reins of power. After some internal bloodletting, the new regime handed the presidency to Gnassingbé Eyadéma, who presided over the country from 1967 until his death in 2005, at which time he was Africa's longest-serving head of state.

The country has since struggled with a transition to multi-party democracy and the legacy of the totalitarian state, all the more so given Eyadéma's son Faure has served as president since his father's death.

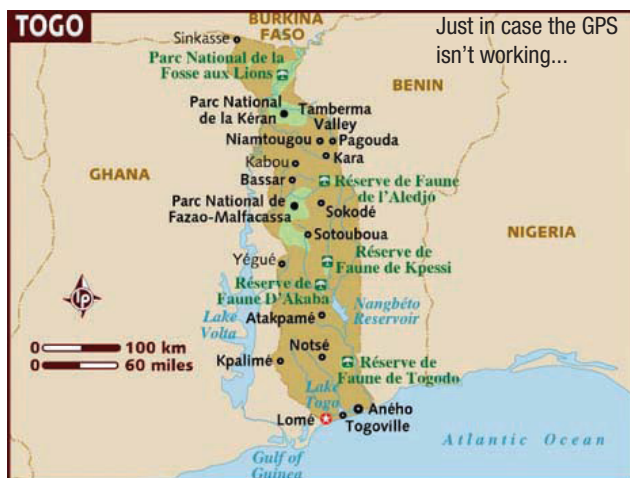
SO WHAT YOU DONE?

Despite qualifying for the African Nations Cup numerous times (although never progressing past the group-stage), Togo had never qualified for the World

Cup finals prior to 2006 - it was hardly coincidental that this was achieved by a new generation of overseas-based players, in particular Arsenal striker Emmanuel Adebayor. Certainly the country's WC qualification in 2005 took the Togolese people's minds off the socio-political strife in the wake of Gnassingbé Eyadéma's passing.

However, the elation of being at Germany '06 was soon soured by a pay dispute between German-born national coach Otto Pfister and the Togolese FA, which may well have reflected on the team's poor showing at the WC, losing all 3 matches to South Korea, Switzerland and old colonial masters France; the latter particularly stinging given the Togolese had quite fancied themselves to emulate Senegal's WC 2002 feat in dispatching the French. Despite this, the squad had shown enough to indicate potential as a frequent African representative in future WCs, with the talismanic X-factor of rising star Adebayor obvious to all.

As it turned out, Togo failed to qualify for the 2008 African Nations Cup (particularly embarrassing given that minnows Sudan and Namibia had) and their qualification for the 2010 edition in Angola resulted in tragedy - the national-team bus and its Angolan military



convoy were ambushed by a group of separatist rebels en route to the tournament; in the ensuing hail of gunfire the Togolese assistant coach, the bus driver and a Togolese sports commentator lost their lives and 7 more - including players and the team physio and doctor - were injured in the attack. In the wake of the tragedy Togo pulled out of the tournament - and promptly barred from the following edition in 2012, although the ban was lifted on appeal soon after. Emmanuel Adebayor, by then with Manchester City, promptly announced his retirement from international football, only to change his mind in early 2011. Togolese football was in the headlines again later in the year on a much lighter note this time, due to the revelation that a friendly between the Togolese and Bahrain hadn't featured a single registered-professional Togolese player; the Togolese squad (some of whom weren't even Togolese citizens, as it turned out!) were quickly outed as amateur imposters, and the 'national coach' was banned for 3 years by the Togolese FA.

Tragicomic in its own right was the fact Togo failed to qualify for the 2012 African Nations Cup, despite having had its ban lifted and the return to the national-team

fold of Emmanuel Adebayor.

BIG CLUBS

The national league is the Togolese Championnat National, and its biggest clubs are AC Semassi with 9 title and 3 cup wins; Étoile Filante de Lomé with 7 titles, 4 cups and losing-finalists in the 1968 African Champions League; Dynamic Togolais with 6 titles and 3 cups, and ASKO Kara with 4 titles and 4 cups - the Togolese NT's assistant coach who perished in the 2010 bus attack, Améleté Abalo, deputised as coach of ASKO at the time of his death.

REP YOUR COLORS

Nicknamed Les Eperviers (The Sparrowhawks), the Togolese NT traditionally wears a yellow top with lime-green shorts and either white or yellow socks (although lime-green and yellow are also used) - the current strip consists of all-yellow with horizontal red pinstripes, and the away is white shorts and socks with a lime-green and fluoro-yellow-trimmed shirt. As for the clubs, AC Semassi wear a white top with red sleeves, shorts and socks; Étoile wear the checkerboard shirt and dark shorts/socks template of Portuguese side Boavista, but with blue instead of black; Dynamic

Togolais wear a kit much like that of Semassi (though owing more to the kit of Ajax Amsterdam) and ASKO Kara wear a yellow top with thick black horizontal band, black shorts and yellow socks, much like the traditional kit of Germany's Dynamo Dresden.

MATCHWINNERS

Emmanuel Adebayor is hands-down the country's best-known and greatest-ever player to date; from his humble beginnings with Lomé-based club OC Agaza to his European sojourn with French sides Metz and AS Monaco before carving his name in the EPL with Arsenal and Tottenham Hotspur either side of a stint with the Spanish might of Real Madrid, he became known as one of the deadliest strikers in world football despite the tall order of achieving similar success at international level. Hence why his 2010 retirement from national-team duty was not lamented by many, and his return to it received with as much apparent indifference.

Although he is the Sparrowhawks' go-to man, other notable members of the Togolese NT include Wolverhampton striker Abdoul-Razak Boukari, Auxerre and Lorient midfielders Prince Segbefia and Alaixys Romao, Mohammed Alassani of Italian Serie D side Cosenza, and the far-flung defensive duo of Moldovan-based Abdoul-Gafar Mamah (of FC Dacia Chisinau) and Vincent Bossou of Vietnam's Becamex Binh Duong.

SO WHAT NOW?

With the onus firmly on the Sparrowhawks to qualify for Brazil 2014, it will indeed be a test of their character to see them do so, and especially for Adebayor given the persistent accusations of him putting his club career before his country. Hopefully a great showing at the upcoming African Nations Cup this year will see them do just that!

Nut-Meg Dept.

Boo's World

SUMMER SERIES



By Mark Boric

Assistant referee's across the A-League have been spotted at Rebel Sport outlets acquiring cricketer's boxes in preparation for the return to Australian football of Joel Griffiths. They must be anticipating a different version of the Big Bash League.

Will Central Coast be able to field a team in the Finals was a question being posed prior to the weekend. Tom Rogic and Matt Ryan were linked with transfer window moves,

which is the annual period of exodus from Gosford. Looks like the speculation will come to nothing, enabling the Mariners to have a serious crack at lifting their first ever Toilet Seat Trophy.

Perth Glory have let Billy Mehmet go to Bangkok Glass (which sounds like something that could result in a severed member). The rumour mill had them briefly linked with Michael Owen, the only other professional footballer in the world almost as inactive as their most recent transfer target, Harry Kewell.

Wherever Alessandro Del Piero goes in the A-League, it seems a pitch invader is not far away. Against Central Coast Mariners at home he was shown a traditional Aussie dinner of meat and two veg by a patron. Last weekend straight after the final whistle in Perth a fella in a white t-shirt was conversing with him. I had doubts it was anyone he knew when Fox



Meat and two veg night at SFV v Mariners recently. Photo GREG SEATON

switched cameras, and they were confirmed when a different camera saw the chap appear again in the background, held in a headlock by a the boys in fluoro. Frank Farina reckons he needs more protection from referees, but I'm not sure it's their job to hold back the stalkers.

Sepp Blatter reckons there should be a better way of handling racism than a team

walking off the pitch as Kevin Prince Boateng did with AC Milan in a friendly against Pro Patria last week. Sepp, you are 76 years old. You've been at FIFA for nearly 40 of those years. Racism has been around a long time. If you have a better idea, could you not have implemented something by now? Let people take a stand, or maybe coming from one of the whitest



No 1 fans who can definitely pile on the misery....

countries in Europe you don't like black troublemakers?

Finally, I would like to clarify that the Against All Odds box appears alongside this column not because I am like Jaimee Rodgers and shoving gambling down your throats, but because I don't write enough. If you like the 4.50 on Adelaide United, please just give your money to me if you insist on throwing it

AGAINST ALL ODDS

| A-League Champion 2012/13 | Last week | This week |
|---------------------------|-----------|-----------|
| Central Coast Mariners | 3.50 | 3.50 |
| Adelaide United | 4.50 | 6.00 |
| West Sydney Wanderers | 8.00 | 13.0 |
| Melbourne Victory | 6.00 | 5.00 |
| Brisbane Roar | 29.0 | 29.0 |
| Perth Glory | 41.0 | 41.0 |
| Wellington Phoenix | 126 | 151 |
| Newcastle Jets | 151 | 151 |
| Melbourne Heart | 151 | 126 |
| Sydney FC | 201 | 201 |

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Mariners Extend Lead As Victory Stumble

By Daniel Quinn

Central Coast still lead the National Youth League (NYL) after Round 11, but this time by six points after the second placed Melbourne Victory lost to Newcastle. Also in Round 11, the AIS recorded their first win of a tough season.

The Central Coast Mariners got the round off in style with the 5-0 thrashing of the Western Sydney Wanderers at Cook Park on Saturday.

The Mariners didn't take long to get the scoring underway as on 12 minutes Daniel Bragg powerfully drove past Jerrad Tyson in goals for the Wanderers.

Anthony Caceres then exquisitely lobbed the charging Tyson on 34 minutes, before Brad McDonald made it 3-0 just after the break curling nicely into the bottom corner.

Mitchell Duke then wrapped up the scoring with a quick fire double neatly slotted past substitute 'keeper Thomas Manos twice in eight minutes.

Meanwhile at Goodwin Park, the Brisbane Roar came from behind to beat Sydney FC 3-1.

The Roar went into the break behind as Mitch Mallia poked past Brisbane 'keeper Fraser Chalmers eight minutes before the interval.

Substitute Patrick Theodore got the comeback underway leveling the contest on 53 minutes after a mazy run down the left.

The Roar then sealed the points as Kwame Yeboah belted into the roof of the net, before Benjamin Liftin fired in the third after some good build up play.

The AIS secured their first win of the season with a 2-1 victory over Perth Glory on Sunday.

Andrew Higgins gave the Glory



Ben Liftin scores Brisban Roar's third goal to put the game beyond doubt against SFC. Photo: KEITH EIGELAND

the lead on 70 minutes after a neat finish, but the AIS fought back with two free kicks.

Matthew Schmidt equalized for the visitors curling his set piece over the ball and into the corner in spectacular style.

The Institute then took the lead late on with Joshua Barresi's free kick bouncing through the hands of Perth 'keeper Jordan Franken.

The Newcastle Jets recorded a 1-0 win over the Melbourne Victory at Wanderers Oval on Sunday afternoon.

The only goal of the game came via playmaker Bernardo Ribeiro

on 18 minutes as the Brazilian calmly slotted past Victory 'keeper Tando Velaphi after a nice Marko Jesic ball.

Both sides had plenty of chances, but neither could put them away as the Jets defence stood firm throughout.

A late Liam Wooding penalty has secured Adelaide United a 1-0 win over the Melbourne Heart at Epping Stadium on Monday morning.

With soaring heat expected in the afternoon kick-off was moved to 10am and in an end-to-end first half both sides had plenty of

chances, but neither could break the deadlock.

But the deadlock was finally broken with nine minutes left on the clock via a penalty from Wooding, after Will Abbott was sent off for denying Wooding a goal scoring opportunity.



Anthony Prioa congratulates Patrick Theodore on his goal. Photo: KEITH EIGELAND

Premiership Up For Grabs On Final Day

By FFA

The Westfield W-League is intriguingly poised after a dramatic penultimate round of action.

Top spot remains up for grabs, as do positions one and two which determine home semi-finalists, while six teams are still in the hunt for a top four finish.

A drama-charged weekend saw Perth Glory toppled from top spot, Brisbane Roar edge out rivals Sydney FC to move top, while the contest between Canberra United and Western Sydney Wanderers was abandoned.

Brisbane moved top as goals in each half from the ever-dangerous Tameka Butt were enough to see off the Sky Blues.

The result pushed the Roar top, while Sydney FC's fate is now out of their hands dependant on the result of the match between Canberra and the Wanderers.

The contest in the nation's capital will now be played on Tuesday after lightning forced an abandonment after 36 minutes with the score line still deadlocked. The match had earlier been postponed from an afternoon kick-off due to extreme heat in Canberra.

The Glory were stunned on home turf by bottom side Newcastle Jets who upset the form book to gain a 2-2 draw against the in-form leaders.

Emily van Egmond and youngster Jasmine Courtenay scored at either end of the contest to deny the Glory who slipped to third.

Melbourne Victory moved into second with a comfortable 4-1 win over Adelaide United.

Three goals into the opening quarter-hour sent Melbourne on their way leaving the Victory with a hold on a maiden home semi-final.



Jessica McDonald (Victory) gets the ball past Adelaide keeper Kristi Harvey, but Emma Cjeecker is there to back up. Photo: JOHN PUNSHON

Canberra United kept alive their hopes of retaining the Westfield W-League crown by making sure they were in the top four heading into the final round of action after a commanding 5-0 demolition of Western Sydney Wanderers at McKellar Park. A stunning virtuoso display from Hayley Raso was the highlight as Canberra scored at regular intervals to claim a morale boosting win.

Following the abandoned fixture on the weekend both teams elected to play the same eleven that started the aborted game at McKellar Park meaning that US international Kristen Mewis made her debut in the team replacing Nikki Washington. Georgia Yeoman-Dale was given a start at right back, with a licence to roam, with Catherine Brown reverting to the bench.



Adelaide's Jessie Wharepouri (left) battles with Enza Barilla (Victory). Photo: JOHN PUNSHON



Abby Erceg (Adelaide) tackles Steph Catley (Victory) Photo:JOHN PUNSHON

Round 11 Results

Central Coast Mariners: 5 (Daniel Bragg 12, Anthony Caceres 34, Brad McDonald 47, Mitchell Duke 70, 78)
Western Sydney Wanderers: 0

Perth 1 (Higgins 70)
Australian Institute of Sport 2 (Schmidt, Barresi)

Newcastle Jets 1 (Ribeiro 18)
Melbourne Victory 0

Melbourne Heart 0
Adelaide United 1 (Wooding 81p)

Brisbane Roar 3 (Patrick Theodore 53, Kwame Yeboah 64, Benjamin Liftin 65)
Sydney FC 1 (Mitchell Mallia 37)

NYL Standings

| | P | W | D | L | F | A | D | P |
|---------------------|----|---|---|---|----|----|-----|----|
| 1 CC Mariners | 11 | 9 | 0 | 2 | 28 | 12 | 16 | 27 |
| 2 Melbourne Victory | 11 | 7 | 0 | 4 | 27 | 13 | 14 | 21 |
| 3 Newcastle Jets | 11 | 6 | 1 | 4 | 27 | 19 | 8 | 19 |
| 4 Melbourne Heart | 11 | 6 | 1 | 4 | 20 | 14 | 6 | 19 |
| 6 Adelaide United | 11 | 5 | 3 | 3 | 24 | 17 | 7 | 18 |
| 5 Brisbane Roar | 11 | 5 | 2 | 4 | 25 | 19 | 6 | 17 |
| 7 Perth Glory FC | 11 | 4 | 1 | 6 | 23 | 24 | -1 | 13 |
| 8 WSyd Wanderers | 11 | 2 | 4 | 5 | 12 | 27 | 15 | 10 |
| 9 Sydney FC | 11 | 3 | 1 | 7 | 24 | 30 | -6 | 10 |
| 10 AIS | 11 | 1 | 1 | 9 | 11 | 45 | -34 | 4 |

Round 12 Fixtures

Sydney FC v Western Sydney Wanderers Oval, Dee Why
Saturday 12 January KO 10:00 AM

Newcastle Jets v Perth Glory Wanderers Oval, Broadmeadow
Sunday 13 January KO 10:30 AM

AIS v Melbourne Heart AIS Athletics Track
Sunday 13 January KO 1:00 PM

Melb Victory v CC Mariners SS Anderson Res, Port Melbourne
Sunday 13 January KO 3:00 PM

Adelaide United v Brisbane Roar Burton Park
Sunday 13 January KO 5:30 PM

All KO times ae AEDT

Round 11 Results

Melbourne Victory 4 (Danielle Johnson 2', Petra Larsson 6', Jessica McDonald 14', Laura Spiranovic 57')
Adelaide United 1 (Sarah McLaughlin 87')

Perth Glory 2 (Rosie Sutton 22', Kate Gill 56')
Newcastle Jets 2 (Emily van Egmond 3', Jasmin Courtenay 77')

Canberra United 5 (Hayley Raso 34', Michelle Heyman 44', Caitlin Munoz 74', Vanessa Hart (og) 82', Kristen Mewis 89')
Western Sydney Wanderers 0

Sydney FC 0
Brisbane Roar 2 (Butt)

W-League Standings

| | P | W | D | L | F | A | D | P |
|---------------------|----|---|---|---|----|----|-----|----|
| 1 Brisbane Roar | 11 | 7 | 2 | 2 | 23 | 14 | 9 | 23 |
| 2 Melbourne Victory | 11 | 7 | 1 | 3 | 23 | 11 | 12 | 22 |
| 3 Perth Glory | 11 | 6 | 3 | 2 | 31 | 19 | 12 | 21 |
| 5 Canberra United | 11 | 5 | 3 | 3 | 24 | 15 | 9 | 18 |
| 4 Sydney FC | 11 | 5 | 2 | 4 | 27 | 22 | 5 | 17 |
| 6 WS Wanderers | 11 | 4 | 1 | 6 | 17 | 20 | -3 | 13 |
| 7 Adelaide United | 11 | 2 | 0 | 9 | 11 | 37 | -26 | 6 |
| 8 Newcastle Jets | 11 | 1 | 2 | 8 | 12 | 30 | -18 | 5 |

Round 12 Fixtures

Brisbane Roar Vs Canberra United
Sat 12 Jan KO 11:30am
Queensland Sports & Athletics Centre, Nathan (QSAC)

Adelaide United Vs Perth Glory
Sat 12 Jan KO 2:30pm
Burton Park

West Sydney Wanderers Vs Sydney FC
Sat 12 Jan KO 10:00am
Campbelltown Stadium

Newcastle Jets Vs Melbourne Victory
Sun 13 Jan KO 4:30pm
Wanderers Oval

All KO times ae AEDT

Thunder seeks justice from FFA appeal



VICTORIAN Premier League champion Dandenong Thunder is waiting on confirmation of a hearing date after lodging an appeal with Football Federation Australia.

Thunder has exhausted the Football Federation Victoria tribunal and appeals process and feels compelled to take its case to the national body.

The club that swept all before it on the field in 2012 has had its ongoing existence put to the test by a hefty fine and a closed-doors home game ruling after well-publicised events involving flares and minor injuries to two female spectators that took place during last October's VPL Grand Final win over Oakleigh Cannons at AAMI Park.

The three-point deduction that also hangs over Thunder's head going into the 2013 season seems almost an afterthought to the looming legal joust.

The original FFV tribunal hearing on 8 November fined Thunder \$40,000 and imposed a lockout of 10 home games but on appeal the fine was raised to \$45,000 while the home-game lockout was ruled to end by 30 June.

At the time of the appeal ruling Thunder had five games at home before the mid-season deadline but shortly after FFV released a revised VPL fixture that switched two away games in the first half of the season to Thunder home games effectively giving the club a seven-game lockout at George Andrews Reserve.

Thunder found the timing of the revised fixture curious to say the least. One of the rescheduled games was originally against South Melbourne at Lakeside Stadium but FFV stated that the South Melbourne home ground would not be available due to issues related to the staging of the 2013 Australian Grand Prix.

Why Souths home ground should remain affected by an event staged six weeks earlier is puzzling.

"We could have lodged fixture requests ourselves but FFV would likely see any request by us to be prejudicial to the actual punishment at hand," said Thunder spokesperson Cezar Jakupi.

"We made a decision not to expend too much energy on this as we want to focus our energy on areas where we can achieve a better result.

"I'm expecting that we will get a complete rehearing at FFA."

Jakupi believes that there is a marked difference in penalties imposed at national and state level for similar offences albeit that the FFA constitution says that all state federations must operate under the directions and rules of FFA as the

peak body.

"I would argue that there has been a series of incidents in the current A-League season where no club has been held solely liable for the incidents," he said.

"Last year Ben Buckley (then FFA CEO) released a statement saying that they would punish the individual because a club has thousands of supporters and how can anyone reasonably expect a club to control every one of those supporters." There are some strange elements to this case and what took place during the FFV tribunal and appeals process.

Prior to the Grand Final, Thunder contacted FFV and offered to employ Blue Thunder security on the day.

Blue Thunder's principal is Kosta Avramovski and his company has provided security at Thunder home games for the past couple of seasons.

FFV knocked back the offer saying that Thunder supporters had behaved in exemplary fashion in 2012 and that the federation rated the game as a low-risk event.

Another surprising element of this case is the charge sheets under which Thunder faced judgment and eventual penalty. Thunder was charged as the home team at what was a neutral venue when in fact Oakleigh was the official home team and Thunder the away team.

"What our senior counsel argued at the appeal hearing was that Dandenong Thunder was incorrectly charged and that this was prejudicial to the hearing as the home team under FFV rules of competition bears much greater responsibility for security arrangements and supporter behaviour," said Jakupi.

"It actually is a crucial point because under FFV's own rules it says that if you are the home team and problems occur and we can't properly identify who it was then the home team has a responsibility for whoever did that.

"The appeals board said that the incorrect charge sheet was not that relevant to the punishments handed out at the initial tribunal hearing. It was, to put it mildly, perplexing how they interpreted that."

At the tribunal FFV presented as part of its evidence a comment by a 14-year-old on Dandenong Thunder's facebook page on the morning of the Grand Final where the teenager had said he'd got two flares.

Based upon this comment by a minor via a social media vehicle notorious for the inaccuracy and frivolity of posts, the federation attempted to argue that Thunder knew what was going to happen



Happier times at AAMI Park as Thunder head coach Chris Taylor (left), Veton Korcari and Shane Rexhepi lift the 2012 VPL Grand Final trophy aloft. Photo: PETER PSARROS.

and was complicit in the events that unfolded that day.

However, the club's response was swift.

"After the tribunal hearing Thunder got the kid and his parents down to the club and grilled him. The club then went to Dandenong police station and handed in the boy's name and contact details and invited police to investigate further. All of this was raised at appeal but FFV kept saying that we had not been compliant," said Jakupi.

"There were reports of serious breaches of security at AAMI Park at the VPL Grand Final and the FFV tribunal at the original hearing was puzzled as to the fact that not once did police, AAMI Park or security officials attempt to go to the area of the stand from where the flares were emanating."

"Claims by FFV at appeal that we were complicit in the events of the day and had been unco-operative and were stonewalling were strongly denied by the club in terms of the evidence at hand."

Thunder argued that it has over 3000 members on its facebook site and it was impossible to monitor every single post, certainly not in real time.

The club maintains that the comments made by the 14 year old

were not even seen by any of the club's facebook administrators as everyone was preparing for the Grand Final being staged a few hours later.

Subsequent to the Grand Final triumph there were hundreds of posts made on Thunder's facebook site and the earlier post by the 14-year-old rolled off without anyone batting an eyelid until it was brought up by the FFV at the tribunal hearing.

On numerous occasions Thunder has issued messages through facebook, and community media and club meetings, condemning the firing of the flares at AAMI Park and appealing for witnesses to come forward with information or to go directly to Crime Stoppers and provide this information to police. "What more can we do?" asked Jakupi.

At appeal Jakupi presented a financial statement which outlined the total impact of the tribunal fines as being close to \$250,000 due to the lockout effect on gate receipts, memberships and sponsorship.

"Such fines and the lockout are unprecedented in Australian sport and we would strongly argue that no other club could survive such an impost," he said.

"I think there clearly should be some consistency here. FFV targets a non-professional club, a community club like Dandenong Thunder, who cops a massive financial penalty not at their home ground where they are not responsible for policing or security yet we don't see FFA sanctioning A-League clubs in the manner in which we have been sanctioned.

"What we are saying is that the club isn't trying to wash its hands

of responsibility but to make the club fully and solely responsible for what occurred is blatantly wrong.

"There were reports of serious breaches of security at AAMI Park at the VPL Grand Final and the FFV tribunal at the original hearing was puzzled as to the fact that not once did police, AAMI Park or security officials attempt to go to the area of the stand from where the flares were emanating. There is something not right there and the club does not accept that the FFV should lump us with all the responsibility."

It's important to note that an extensive Victoria Police investigation following the Grand Final has yet to identify those who set off the flares and at this stage no charges have been laid over the incident. FFV general manager of football Tim Frampton said in the Dandenong Leader last month that he believed the competition "ran one of the fairest disciplinary procedures in Australian sport and Dandenong Thunder were given a fair hearing during their initial tribunal and subsequent appeal."

Well, you could hardly expect anything different now could you?

I'll leave you with a quote from colleague Mark Boric, which may well sum up the way Thunder feels right now. In September 2011, Boric commented in Goal! Weekly on the FFV tribunal thus:

"Consistency, fairness, common sense and logic are just some of the things I consider lacking from the current set-up."

Don't be surprised if these conflicting views end up under the full glare of the Victorian Supreme Court spotlight. We'll keep you posted.

Sydney United folds
SYDNEY United entered liquidation on 10 December and an insolvency notice to that effect was posted on the ASIC website on 21 December.

As you can imagine this matter raised a few eyebrows at Football NSW when I contacted the state body for comment last Monday, the first day of the new year that the office was open for business.

The following day I spoke to Belinda Woolford, Football NSW's Head of Communications and Marketing.

"The first I knew about it was your message yesterday," she said.

"I spoke to our CEO and there's been nothing to do with this that has been brought to our attention but our media department is looking into this further."

Disturbed at the sudden collapse of one of the legendary clubs of Australian football I eventually tracked down former Sydney United administrator and ex-Football NSW chairman and director, Robert Sestan, who put all our fears to rest.

"The matter you are seeking clarification on has nothing to do with Sydney United 58 FC," said Sestan.

He then gave me a name to contact if I had "any queries regarding entities from a few years back". Aha. Finally the penny dropped. Different companies and it appears that the one wound up will not force a hurried restructure of the 2013 NSW Premier League after all.

Bet you former Socceroo and current Foxtel pundit Mark Rudan is happy about that. He was hired as Sydney United 58 FC head coach last October.





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Ian Dobson: The Man With The Title Touch

Blast From The Past



By Roy Hay

Ian Dobson's coaching record is quite phenomenal considering he has had a busy professional life outside the game and it is Australia's loss that he has not been entrusted with one of the top jobs at national or international level in recent years.

As a player he was able to get the absolute maximum out of his talents and having to work hard to do that, he passed on that expectation to generations of players at a number of clubs at national league and state level.

Born in Hull in England in October 1957, Dobson signed for Hull City as an apprentice and made his debut for the senior team under coach John Kaye on 10 April 1976 against Fulham in Division Two of the League. Over the next five seasons he clocked up 92 games for Hull and scored seven goals. In 1980 he moved to Hereford United playing another 41 games and scoring five goals. He was the regular centre-half for Hereford until March 1982 when he decided to come to Australia where he joined Croydon City in the Victorian State League.

His first game was against George Cross on 4th April 1982 and Ken Kontra's team won by a goal to nil, scored by Paul Wade in the 8th minute. Croydon finished mid table in 1982 and Dobson helped drive them to fourth the following year before he was snapped up by



Ian Dobson and Dean Fak celebrate with the VPL trophy in 2005 after defeating Heidelberg Utd 2-0 in the Grand Final. Source: Green Gully Soccer Club.

Preston Makedonia in the National Soccer League.

His first game for Preston was against JUST and Dobson was sent off just before half-time, but the ten men got a one-all draw thanks to a Gary Cole penalty late on. Preston finished just outside the play-offs in the Southern Conference in 1984 but made the final stages the following year under Bill Murray. In 1987 when the league reverted to a single division Dobson moved to Melbourne Croatia where he partnered Alan Davidson, George Hannah, Josip Biskic and Branko Milosevic among others. Croatia struggled in mid-table in 1987-88 and in 1989 Dobson rejoined Croydon City in the Victorian State League. Dobson

was key member of the team that finished third in the league that year, in which he acted as player-coach.

He led by example throughout and scored the only goal of the game in final round against Frankston Pines. Croydon was third again in 1990 and then took part in the first season of the Victorian Premier League in 1991. By now Dobson was restricting his playing career bringing himself on as a substitute in the final match of the season against Bobby McLachlan's Morwell Falcons.

His coaching expertise had been noted and Preston Makedonia secured his services for the 1991-92 NSL season. He coached the club to win the Dockerty Cup in 1992 on penalties, after a one-all draw with

South Melbourne, in which Kris Trajanovski scored for Makedonia and Con Boutsianis for Hellas. However his first spell at NSL level was not as successful as he and the club hoped and he was replaced by Oscar Crino, but Preston was relegated at the end of 1993.

Dobson pulled on the boots again for Knox City in the winter of 1993 but then was appointed senior coach at Altona Gate succeeding Mike Micevski. In 1994 he drove Altona (now Magic) up to fourth and in 1995 they reached second spot after the home and away games. In the Grand Final the Magic beat Bulleen Lions 3-2 thanks to a last minute goal by John Markovski, so Dobson had his first championship



Ian Dobson headshot. Source: Green Gully Soccer Club.

- Ian Dobson Honours
- NSL Champions: Melbourne Knights 1995/6
- VPL Champions: 1995, 1997 (Altona Magic), 1999, 2000, 2003, 2005, 2010, 2011 (Green Gully Cavaliers).
- Dockerty Cup: 1992 (Preston), 2004 (Green Gully)
- VPL Coach of the Year: 1995 (Altona Magic), 1999 (Green Gully).

the winter of 1997 and topped the league and won the Grand Final by four goals to two against Bulleen. In 1998 the Magic finished second and went out on penalties to Bulleen in the Preliminary Final. At that point Green Gully made its move signing Dobson for the 1999 season, which it won from Port Melbourne Sharks. There was no finals series in 1999 or 2000 both of which Green Gully won under Dobson. 2001 was a transitional year for Gully finishing down the table and in 2002 it went out in the Preliminary Final to Preston Lions. By 2003 with a settled team including Darren McGrath, Zoran Markovski, Dean Fak, Dragi Nasteovski, Jeff Fleming, Simon Storey, Brandon Vassallo, Henry Velkovski, Adrian Cervinski, Mijo Trupkovic, Nick Tsaltas, Anthony Magnacca and Andy Vargas, Gully won the Grand Final against Frankston Pines. Melbourne Knights grabbed Dobson once again for the 2003-04 final year of the NSL. The malaise which led to the demise of the league was evident from the start and despite an emotional final match against Sydney United (a fellow Croatian-backed club) the season was a disappointment in terms of results, though several young players were introduced who were to go on to have successful careers in the A-League.

Ian Dobson returned to Green Gully and promptly won the VPL again in 2005. In 2006 South Melbourne knocked Gully out in the Elimination Final, and it was a similar story in 2007 when Whittlesea Zebras got up after extra-time. In 2008 Gully reached the semi final only to lose to Heidelberg United. Dobson stepped aside in 2009, but since then he has acted as Director of Coaching at the club mentoring a series of younger coaches with his unrivalled experience of the game, and filling in when there was a crisis. He has a lot more to contribute to the game and it is to be hoped that those responsible for the future development of football draw on his experience and expertise.



Two of the strongest men in the game, Ian Dobson (Melbourne Croatia) and John Kosmina (Sydney Olympic). Both excellent players and coaches. Photo: Les Shorrock. Les Shorrock collection, Deakin University Library.



Another two tough customers, Shaun Parton and Ian Dobson in action for Preston Makedonia at Olympic Park. Photo: Les Shorrock. Les Shorrock collection, Deakin University Library



Ian Dobson with Andrew 'Stabber' Marth and the 1996 Dockerty Cup at Bob Jane Stadium after Melbourne Knights defeated Altona Magic 4-2. Photo: JOHN PUNSHON

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It has been no secret that a number of the world best football players have had early beginnings in Futsal. South America has been doing this for years with five time World Cup winners Brazil having had a large number of their stars all playing Futsal in their development years, examples are Neymar, Ronaldinho, Kaka just to name a few.

In Australia we are just starting to see a few stars that have come through playing both forms of the game (indoor / Outdoor).

The most high profile of these players is **Tom Rogic** from the Central Coast Mariners who played for the Futsal National team (Futsalroos) at the AFC Championships in 2010 prior to his recent call up to the Socceroos. Rogic was recently quoted by news.com.au saying “I think it’s developed my technical side of the game massively. There are coaches and people who discourage futsal. I remember having some coaches who didn’t want me playing it at all even in the off-season because they thought it would harm my development and be a negative for my football, but I found it completely the opposite. I think it’s helped me immensely in terms of my footballing game today and I would really encourage all the young players to really get involved with it.”

Some other young football players who have had a start in Futsal are **Mustafa Amini** (Central Coast Mariners and now with Borussia Dortmund in the German Bundesliga), **Bernie Ibini** Isei (Central Coast Mariners) and **Terry Antonis** (Sydney FC / Young Socceroos) to name a few.

In not just in the male side of the sport Football has benefited, there has also been a large number of Women’s players who have also played both forms of the game examples being Matildas stars Kyah Simon, Servet Uzunlar.

In Victoria Futsal Oz has seen a couple of youngsters come through the centre now trying to make a name for themselves one is Melbourne Victory’s **Andrew Nabbout** and the other being **Rodrigo Covarrubias** (C.A River Plate U20’s).



Rodrigo Covarrubias playing with Fitzroy FC in the Nike V-League. Photo: DAMIAN BRIGGS



Rodrigo Covarrubias with teammate Freddy Araujo. Photo: PERSONAL COLLECTION



Mariners star Tom Rogic playing for Inner West Allstars in the Football NSW Futsal Premier League. Photo: DAMIAN BRIGGS

Andrew Nabbout played at Futsal Oz as a junior and is regularly seen around the centre watching the face pace version of the game. He has had stints with Hume, Ftizroy and Essendon in the Nike V-League premiership.

While **Rodrigo Covarrubias** currently on holidays from South America has been played a 6 game stint for Fitzroy FC in the Nike V-League to keep his skill

sharp for his return to South America after the Christmas break.

At 19 Covarrubias has already achieved a number of goals in his early career, In 2010 Rodrigo made the top 24 players for Nike’s The Chance, Oceania Finals, He also eprésented Victoria at the FFA Futsal National Championships in Canberra 3 times. Currently applying his trade in



Melbourne Victory’s Andrew Nabbout is also a Futsal Oz Alumni.

for C.A River Plate U20’s for arguably one of the biggest clubs in Argentina. Covarrubias has also had a spell with Chilean club Universidad Catolica. Rodrigo like those mentioned above started playing Futsal at a young age and credits his technique to playing Futsal on a regular basis.

How can Futsal help Football players?
Futsal is played in a smaller area so it allows players to get many more touches of the ball, players also improve their first touch due playing in a tighter playing area. There is also greater emphasis on skills rather than physical contact, which encourages players to use/try their skills and improve them.

Futsal also develops football match intelligence through the constantly changing tacti-

cal situations encountered during a match, players are required to track runners, with a high number of transitions from attack to defence it helps improve a players fitness. With teams consisting of 5 players teamwork and combination passing is required to breakdown defences, in order to create chances on goal. Also due to the fast nature of Futsal it creates a number of man-on-man battles that help improve attacking and defensive skills.

The ball is also unique as Futsal is played with a low bounce ball with the goal to keep the ball on the court at all times, this allows players to be creative with their passing and not to kick the ball long over the top, like is encountered in the outdoor game.

| V-League Standings | | | | | | | | | | |
|--------------------|----|----|---|----|----|----|-----|-----|--|--|
| | P | W | D | L | GF | GA | GD | Pts | | |
| 1 Pascoe Vale FC | 11 | 10 | 1 | 0 | 87 | 44 | +43 | 31 | | |
| 2 Hume FC | 11 | 8 | 1 | 2 | 83 | 32 | +51 | 25 | | |
| 3 Metropolitan FC | 11 | 8 | 0 | 3 | 87 | 54 | +33 | 24 | | |
| 4 Vic Vipers FC | 11 | 7 | 2 | 2 | 58 | 42 | +16 | 23 | | |
| 5 Moreland FC | 11 | 6 | 0 | 5 | 53 | 81 | -28 | 18 | | |
| 6 Ashburton FC | 11 | 5 | 1 | 5 | 42 | 35 | +7 | 16 | | |
| 7 Fitzroy FC | 11 | 5 | 1 | 5 | 47 | 43 | +4 | 16 | | |
| 8 CF Brunswick | 11 | 4 | 0 | 7 | 45 | 60 | -15 | 12 | | |
| 9 FC Balwyn | 11 | 3 | 1 | 7 | 52 | 71 | -19 | 10 | | |
| 10 FC Prahran | 11 | 3 | 1 | 7 | 46 | 65 | -19 | 10 | | |
| 11 FC Essendon | 11 | 3 | 0 | 8 | 36 | 75 | -39 | 9 | | |
| 12 Brighton FC | 11 | 0 | 0 | 11 | 27 | 61 | -34 | 0 | | |

Round 12 Clashes Friday January 18

6:30pm – Pascoe Vale FC vs. Brighton FC
7:20pm – Moreland FC vs. CF Brunswick
8:10pm – Vic Vipers FC vs. Ashburton FC
9:00pm – Fitzroy FC vs. FC Prahran
9:50pm – Metropolitan FC vs. FC Balwyn
10:40pm – Hume FC vs. FC Essendon


Round 13 Clashes Sunday January 20

2:00pm – FC Balwyn vs. Pascoe Vale FC
3:00pm – Fitzroy FC vs. Hume FC
4:00pm – Ashburton FC vs. Brighton FC
5:00pm – FC Essendon vs. Moreland FC
6:00pm – CF Brunswick vs. Vic Vipers FC
7:00pm – FC Prahran vs. Metropolitan FC

Top Goal Scorers

Juso Julardzija (Metropolitan FC) – 24 Goals
Alija Redzepovic (Metropolitan FC) – 22 Goals
Ernie Simsek (Pascoe Vale FC) – 17 Goals
Vadim Mazurskiy (Hume FC)– 17 Goals
Burukan Koca (Moreland FC)– 16 Goals

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“MAZURKA’S” LEGACY TO LIVE ON

Coverage in Uruguay and across the world this past week has been widespread on the news of the death of legendary goalkeeper Ladislao Mazurkiewicz.

It is vitally important for young generations to know and understand the who, what, when, where, why and how's when it comes to football in addition to playing the game - whatever the level it is.

As for goalkeepers, as for Australian-Uruguayans and football lovers alike, Ladislao Mazurkiewicz is a football immortal.

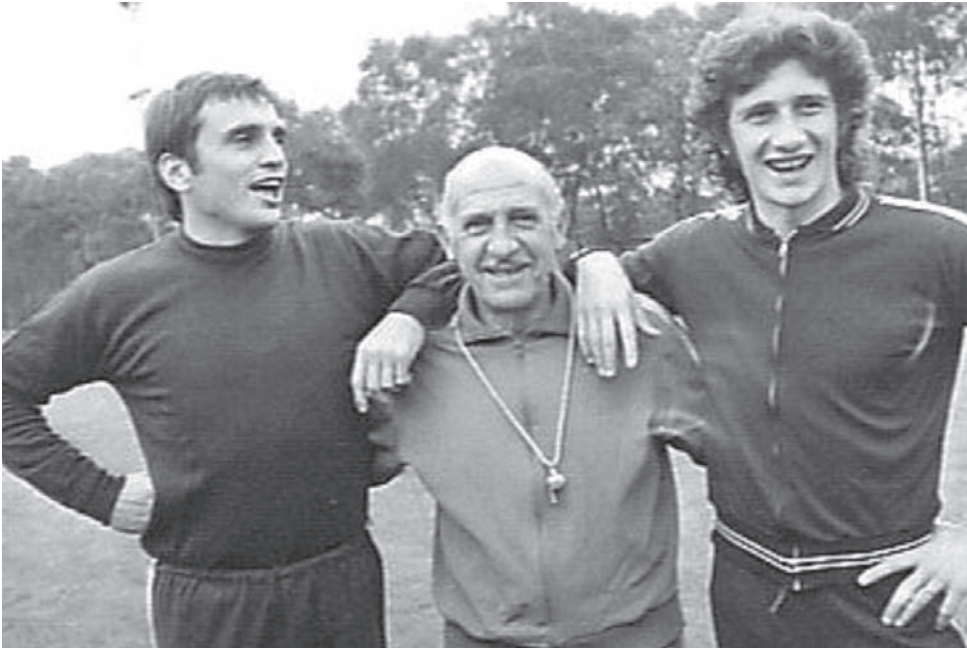
The former custodian of 'La Celeste' and Peñarol amongst other clubs died last week from a short respiratory problem at aged 67.

Another former national team goalkeeper in Fernando Álvarez, who famously saved two important penalty kicks against Brazil in the 1995 edition of the Copa América on home soil announced the tragic news on his Twitter account.

Mazurkiewicz was regarded as one of the best between the posts in the world. He was born in the tiny beach side city of Piriápolis in Maldonado on the 14th of Febrero, 1945.

Nicknamed “Chiquito”, he made his debut with Racing (Montevideo) in 1963 and two seasons later he transferred to giants Peñarol where he played up until 1970. In his first stint with the “Aurinegros” he was behind three Uruguayan domestic titles in 1965, 1967 and 1968, plus the prestigious Copa Libertadores trophy against Argentina's River Plate, the Intercontinental Cup in 1966 against Real Madrid and the Super Cup of Intercontinental Champions in 1969.

His achievements at club level continued this time across the border to Brazil with Atlético Mineiro, lifting the Brazilian championship of 1971. In 1974, Mazurkiewicz continued his



Just after training, here seen left with Roberto Porta (M) and Fernando Morena (R).
SOURCE: NL-HaNA, ANEFO

journeys, this time to Granada in La Liga staying there until 1978. Then it was in Calama, right in the thick of the Atacama Desert where Cobreloa began to make its name in world football. Playing there for only a season and then one other in Colombia with América de Cali, he returned “home” to Peñarol to retire and winning the 1981 Uruguayan title.

Mazurkiewicz still holds the record for clean sheets in professional Uruguayan football with 987 minutes. With the Uruguayan national team, the U-20 South American championship or “el Sudamericano” edition of 1964 was won with him in goals and at senior level won the Copa América of 1967.

Having played three FIFA World Cups (in 1966, 1970, 1974), his performances were vital especially in the Mexico edition.

Uruguay went on to reach the semi-finals of the tournament before bowing out to the all-conquering Brazilian side led by Pelé and company. At the end of that tournament, Mazurkiewicz was nominated as the best goalkeeper.

Upon retirement, his coaching career began as first team manager for Peñarol. Later he decided to dedicate his work developing goalkeepers within the same club and for many years. He was not only a pioneer in transmitting his experience onto his first grade pupils, he provided invaluable input to the coaching staff especially in the successful 1993-1997 period.

On Fernando Álvarez's official Twitter account, he left a link to click on recounting a memorable anecdote during the '66 World Cup. His national team teammates were nervous before

kick-off.

It was strange when the goalkeeper noticed the body language, one that wasn't typically on show whilst the compulsory protocol to shake hands with the Queen before playing against England went nearly unnoticed, Mazurkiewicz remarked to Prince Phillip that they “were the real ones on show”.

Immediately after, the Uruguay players felt not only shocked and bemused but served them right to feel much more relaxed and confident. Mazurkiewicz recounted that the singing that come out from the bottom of each of the players' lungs when the national anthem was sung was loud and proud, in true “charrúa” spirit. Extraordinary.

Now in the heavens, Mazurkiewicz has made final transfer. From this week on, he officially



Ladislao Mazurkiewicz captured here during his coaching days at Peñarol. SOURCE: Estadio.com.py

becomes a part of a team of legends, one that our beautiful game will continue to hail when countless other living legends live for their day.

For “Chiquito”, warmly regarded in his prime as the successor to Lev Yashin was more remembered when he made his debut for Racing of Montevideo against Pelé's Santos. His bravery, solid hands and confidence left a huge impression.

“Go out there and save just like you did against us”, exclaimed Roque Gastón Máspoli on the 31st of March when with only

20 years of age was thrown out onto the pitch for his official international club against Santos in the semi-finals of the Copa Libertadores at the intimidating Monumental stadium in Núñez, Buenos Aires.

“Mazurka”, with his Polish surname is a hero for thousands both young and old despite his short stature, it was his hands that is engraved in football history books.

On behalf of Goal! Weekly, muchos gracias and adiós.



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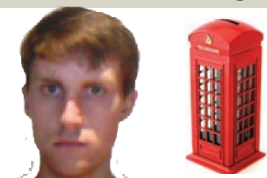
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London Calling



By Samuel Collins

"In the front row, there were some people shaking their heads." German legend Lothar Matthaus couldn't understand what he'd just witnessed. The millions watching on their TV's found it difficult to fathom, too. The FIFA Ballon d'Or Gala – staged in Zurich, Switzerland, on Monday – saw superstars from across the footballing world come together for an evening in which the year's best performers would be recognised. While the recipient of the main award was somewhat predictable, with Barcelona's Lionel Messi rightly collecting his fourth successive Ballon d'Or ahead of club team-mate Andres Iniesta and Real Madrid's Cristiano Ronaldo, it was the FIFPro XI – the best eleven players of 2012 – which left many bewildered.

Some inclusions had social networks and football sites across the internet in meltdown. FIFA's reputation has already suffered in recent times; think executive committees offering to sell their votes in the 2018 and 2022 world cup hosting contest, or president Sepp Blatter's unending index of controversies, most notably "handshake" answer to racism.

FIFA's Pro Star Select Stirs in Zurich



Andrea Pirlo

And while the FIFPro XI is chosen completely by professional players only – close to 45,000 ballots around the globe were used to constitute the finest eleven – it's the world's governing body who decided to introduce this accolade eight years ago. FIFA must anticipate criticism of the methods which they deploy to assess the XI.

There are some players who categorically take their place in the team – none more so than Messi, Iniesta and Ronaldo of course. After this, while the beautiful game is one of debate and opinion, some common sense must prevail. Between the sticks was Iker Casillas, Spain and Real Madrid captain and winner of both La Liga and Euro 2012. Few doubt the ability of the 31-year old, unmistakably a legend of the game, but to overlook Juventus and Italy 'keeper Gianluigi



Lukasz Piszczek

Buffon or Chelsea's Champions League winner Petr Cech was confounding.

Though it was the defence which astounded most. A back four of Daniel Alves, Gerard Pique (both Barcelona), Sergio Ramos and Marcelo (both Real Madrid) is apocryphal. Alves endured his most difficult year since moving to the Camp Nou, with form and fitness suffering enough to see him fall behind fellow Brazilian full-back Adriano of late. Borussia Dortmund's outstanding Lukasz Piszczek – linked with a move to Real Madrid in the near future – was unlucky to miss out. On the left-side, Marcelo was memorably dropped by club coach Jose Mourinho for key fixtures last season (versus Barcelona and Bayern Munich) and then missed the final three months of 2012 with a broken foot. Ashley Cole, imperative in



Giorgio Chiellini

Chelsea's European glory, and Jordi Alba, outstanding for Valencia, then Spain and now Barcelona were surely more appropriate choices. Pique, like Alves, had his most challenging period in Catalonia last year, guilty of various errors – and he's still to this day yet to recapture his form of two years ago. Ramos enjoyed a fine 2011-12 campaign, and was excellent for Spain last summer, but was he really better than Mats Hummels (double winner with Dortmund) or Giorgio Chiellini (undefeated Serie A champion with Juventus)? Pique certainly wasn't.

The biggest omission on the night was still to come, though. Spanish trio Xavi, Iniesta and Xabi Alonso made up the three-man midfield, but where was Juve and Italy playmaker Andrea Pirlo, who played a pivotal part in his club's Scudetto win, done

without losing a game, and then captivated the rest of Europe with some majestic displays at Euro 2012 where his nation reached the final? The veteran's showing against England in the quarter-final – when Pirlo (131) completed 87 more passes than the closest Englishman Cole (44) – was perhaps the performance of the tournament. Manchester City's Ivorian powerhouse Yaya Toure excelled in helping win his club's first league title for 44 years and was another who can feel disappointed not to make the XI.

The front three was the least contentious department of the team. Messi and Ronaldo (in the XI for the sixth and fifth successive times respectively) were supported by Radamel Falcao, the Colombian goal-scoring machine. 56 strikes in 67 appearances for Atletico Madrid represents a remarkable return. But given a fifth of them are in the Europa League, why not Manchester United's Robin van Persie, even if the Dutchman failed to deliver for a deplorable Netherlands side in Poland and Ukraine? The 29-year old has 57 goals in his last 74 club appearances, an amazing feat.

The FIFPro XI may not have been the most notable achievement to be decided in Zurich, but it caused the most stir. With the entire eleven plying their trade in La Liga, a feeling of bigotry is left in the majority of football fan's minds. It's little wonder Matthaus and half the Gala were left shaking their heads.

IN OFF THE POST

mailbag@goalweekly.com

Vent your spleen at mailbag@goalweekly.com or PO Box 142, Port Melbourne, VIC, 3207.

G'day football fans and all the team at Goal! Weekly,

Happy New Year to all!

CCMFC on top will end up with the Premiers Plate again (no need for the helicopter).

CCMFC v WSWFC for the Grand Final, that is my prediction for 2013. Great game at Parramatta Stadium last night, i wonder what the anti-football media will make of the game and the crowd.

A point to make about the SUMMER schedule and the kick off times,

Firstly, i agree with Graham Arnold that they should be 6+1gk on the bench, this will allow felixable decisions to be made on subs, Secondly, stop this absurd 3pm/4pm/5pm kick offs, only FOXTEL likes them.

Thirdly, Melb Heart should try for 9pm kick offs on Fri and Sat nights, much better playing conditions. I am sure the fans would like that as well.

Finally, I must credit the FOXSPORTS team both Football and News on highlighting the GK efforts on the great saves done in the games so far this year, as a member of the goalkeepers brotherhood, the saves don't get much of a mention especially with the anti-football media.

Yours in Football
Les 'Crazy' Farkas
Sydney, NSW



By Alex Milic

Montenegro
Mirko Vucinic has been named Montenegrin player of the year after helping Juventus win the Serie A undefeated. It is his sixth player of the year accolade in the last seven years.

The Montenegro captain and forward beat Fiorentina's Stevan Joveti into second place in the poll of coaches and captains of the country's 12 top-flight clubs, winning 96 points to the ACF Fiorentina forward's 81. As well as Italian Scudetto success, 29-year-old Vucinic has helped his country top 2014 FIFA World Cup qualifying Group H, ahead of England, Poland and Ukraine.

Vucinic says, "It is always a big honour to be the best in my country. This is always a special feeling. I have had a very successful year for my club and national team. I hope 2013 will be even more successful, and I hope this time next year Montenegro will be sure of their participation in the World Cup in 2014."

FK Rudar Pljevlja winger Blažo Igumanovi was named best domestic player. "This award means a lot to me and gives me motivation to be better in the future,

but the award also belongs to my team-mates and coaches," said Igumanovi, who made his international debut against San Marino in November.

After guiding second-division FK elik Nikši to an unforgettable cup win, Slavoljub Bubanja took the prize for best coach. "It was an unforgettable year for me and for elik; I wish my club all the best next year," he said.

The Football Federation of Montenegro (FSCG) also recognised the talents of Torino FC midfielder Marko Baki, FC Zenit St Petersburg forward Luka Djordjevi and FK Zeta attacker Aleksandar Boljevi, who collected accolades as the nation's most promising talent.

Serbia
Borussia Dortmund and Serbia defender Neven Suboti faces a six-week lay-off, which will rule him out for the first leg of the German Bundesliga Champions UEFA Champions League showdown with Ukrainian giants FC Shakhtar Donetsk.

The 24-year-old Serbian international is expected to miss the first leg of the round of 16 tie, in Donetsk on February 13, after picking up an injury during Dortmund's Spanish training camp at La Manga. Suboti was injured in training but the calf tear is worse than first anticipated, and today's prognosis following an MRI scan puts him at risk of sitting out the return match against Shakhtar on 5 March too.



The Montenegrin Prince is the finest once more.

The setback for Jürgen Klopp's team – UEFA Champions League Group D winners and third in the Bundesliga at the winter break – comes 24 hours after the news that Suboti had extended his contract until 2016. Since arriving from 1. FSV Mainz 05 in 2008, the centre-back has made 138 top-flight appearances for Dortmund, scoring 12 goals.

Macedonia
The Football Federation of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FFM) staged a UEFA Football Doctor Education Programme (FDEP) workshop as

part of UEFA's drive to transmit vital medical good practice and harmonise care across Europe.

Expertise is being passed down through the UEFA member national associations in a series of cascaded courses.

The workshop at Skopje's emergency medical skills education and training centre was attended by 22 national-team doctors, and was led by Dr Ilija Stoilov, chairman of the FFM medical committee. Dr Stoilov worked with seven instructors who hold the advanced life support qualification issued by the European Resuscitation Council (ERC). Each doctor present was given training on how to assess and treat critically ill or injured players,

as well as on the treatment of players suffering cardiac arrest – the latter treatment according to ERC guidelines.

All participants welcomed the high standard of the course and training equipment, and agreed that the core elements of successful medical care are not only good skills and knowledge, but also the minimum medical requirements which UEFA has introduced for all UEFA competitions. Each doctor successfully completed all parts of the course, including a multiple-choice question paper as well as practical scenario testing comprising the use of cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR), automated external defibrillators (AED) and on-field

stabilisation techniques – log roll, spinal board, cervical collar and trauma case management.

Stoilov says, "If the aims of the course are to teach effective treatment techniques, share real football experiences and identify best practice, then the workshop was a complete success, as confirmed by all participants. Many thanks to UEFA for providing educational material of excellent quality, both templates and tools."

The FDEP was launched in 2011 with the objective of disseminating advice and information concerning the work undertaken by the modern football doctor. Topics include emergency treatment of players, roles and responsibilities of the football medic, diagnosis and treatment of injuries, prevention and rehabilitation of injuries, and anti-doping. Content has been developed in conjunction with the UEFA Medical Committee and sports medicine experts.

Programme content is being filtered down through the member associations via the hosting of events at national level. Consequently, national association medical representatives are being helped to transfer the knowledge shared in senior international football down to the medical staff and club doctors at all levels.

UEFA is lending medical emergency training kit and is supplying educational tools such as technical handbooks, as well as providing trained course delegates to offer invaluable advice, and an extensive online platform with learning facilities.

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LIVE THE DREAM





EPL
Wrap

By Andrew Bishara

FA Cup still springs surprises

The FA Cup is the oldest competition in the world. Once, it was the fulcrum of the English game. Winning it, was almost as good as winning the league. Everyone looked forward to the final. Now, it hardly gets a mention.

Significantly, it's not considered a major scalp anymore. The UEFA Champions League is now the Holy Grail. Making it into the top four to get into Europe's premier competition is now the destination of every team come season's end.

What made the FA Cup so appealing to viewers was that it was considered a romance: where the lower league teams could pull the ultimate slap in the face and win it. History deemed it that way. There was the Wimbledon's surprise win in '88. The year before Coventry City's victory over Tottenham in the pulsating 3-2 final. In 1994, Everton beat favourites Manchester United to take the cup.

The romance isn't dead; it's just not as prominent as it used to be. Since 1996, only once has the cup has been won by a team outside the "Big Four" of Arsenal Manchester United, Chelsea and Liverpool (and now "Big Six" if you include Manchester City and Tottenham) and that was Portsmouth in 2008. There has been the odd team in the final, including the likes of Stoke City, Everton, Car-



Luis Suárez courts controversy in the FA Cup tie against Mansfield.

diff City, Millwall, Southampton, Aston Villa and Newcastle, but it was against one of the big boys.

It's a surprise also, that the big boys would go that far. There was criticism levelled at the likes of Arsene Wenger and Sir Alex Ferguson when they would put out weakened teams. There are big targets for them to hit. Even that though, they still managed to win it.


Why? Because the weaker teams still do the same. For the likes of Everton and Spurs, fourth place is their target. For the lower teams, they seek Premier League survival for another year. And what about Championship teams and the lower leagues? Well, they want promotion. Promotion brings money; promotion brings development. Making the Premier League is more important than winning the FA Cup.

That's not to completely dismember the FA Cup. There have been many surprises over the recent years: Leeds overcoming United, Barnsley overcoming both Chelsea and Liverpool in 2008, and just this weekend, Brighton & Hove Albion beating Newcastle.

That was the biggest scalp so far. Mansfield Town came close to dumping out Liverpool, save for Luis Suarez's controversial goal. Manchester United and Arsenal both have to replay their games at home, after being held to draws, against West Ham and Swansea respectively. Either though, they were against Premier League opposition, there was some feeling that were great and pulsating ties. The replays hopefully will continue to bring more spice.

Manchester City, Chelsea, Tottenham and Everton all had easy rides into the fourth round, with a host of other Premier League teams having to replay their games, which shows that despite the animosity towards the competition, it's still one that everyone wants to win.

Just ask Arsenal's Jack Wilshere: "We know how much this Cup means and we want to get to Wembley, win and pick up the trophy". Sure, the FA Cup isn't the same cup that it was, but it still has some meaning.

| ENGLAND EPL | | | | | | | | | | |  | |
|---------------------|----|----|----|----|----|----|-----|-----|-----------------------------------|---|--|---|
| | P | W | D | L | F | A | GD | Pts | Last 5 games Most recent first | | | |
| 1 Manchester United | 21 | 17 | 1 | 3 | 54 | 28 | +26 | 52 | W | W | D | W |
| 2 Manchester City | 21 | 13 | 6 | 2 | 41 | 19 | +22 | 45 | W | W | L | W |
| 3 Tottenham Hotspur | 21 | 12 | 3 | 6 | 39 | 27 | +12 | 39 | W | W | D | D |
| 4 Chelsea | 20 | 11 | 5 | 4 | 39 | 19 | +20 | 38 | L | W | W | W |
| 5 Everton | 21 | 9 | 9 | 3 | 35 | 26 | +9 | 36 | W | L | W | D |
| 6 Arsenal | 20 | 9 | 7 | 4 | 40 | 22 | +18 | 34 | D | W | W | W |
| 7 West Bromwich ... | 21 | 10 | 3 | 8 | 29 | 27 | +2 | 33 | L | L | W | D |
| 8 Liverpool | 21 | 8 | 7 | 6 | 34 | 26 | +8 | 31 | W | W | L | W |
| 9 Swansea City | 21 | 7 | 8 | 6 | 31 | 26 | +5 | 29 | D | W | D | D |
| 10 Stoke City | 21 | 6 | 11 | 4 | 21 | 20 | +1 | 29 | L | D | W | D |
| 11 West Ham United | 20 | 7 | 5 | 8 | 24 | 24 | 0 | 26 | W | L | D | L |
| 12 Norwich City | 21 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 24 | 34 | -10 | 25 | L | L | L | W |
| 13 Fulham | 21 | 6 | 6 | 9 | 32 | 37 | -5 | 24 | W | L | D | L |
| 14 Sunderland | 21 | 5 | 7 | 9 | 21 | 29 | -8 | 22 | L | L | W | W |
| 15 Newcastle United | 21 | 5 | 5 | 11 | 27 | 39 | -12 | 20 | L | L | L | W |
| 16 Aston Villa | 21 | 4 | 7 | 10 | 17 | 41 | -24 | 19 | D | L | L | L |
| 17 Southampton | 20 | 4 | 6 | 10 | 27 | 38 | -11 | 18 | D | D | D | L |
| 18 Wigan Athletic | 21 | 5 | 3 | 13 | 22 | 39 | -17 | 18 | L | W | L | L |
| 19 Reading | 21 | 2 | 7 | 12 | 23 | 40 | -17 | 13 | L | W | D | L |
| 20 QPR | 21 | 2 | 7 | 12 | 17 | 36 | -19 | 13 | W | L | L | L |

EPL Preview.
Before, oldest cup competition in the world, the FA Cup, there was the small matter of the English Premier League. So where were we? That's right, the festive period is over and Manchester United are sitting comfortably in the league by a seven-point margin.

And it could be ten, eight, six or four by the end of what is a massive weekend. Liverpool's arrival at Old Trafford for the now enriched and what Paul Scholes called the "biggest games" in the English football calendar.

Scholes' remark is also another dig at their Manchurian rivals, City, by saying that it would take "probably take years for City to create what Liverpool have done". City faces a daunting task when they travel to the Emirates Stadium. The positive note is that, the Emirates isn't a fortress by any means and they play their game after United's.

But this is the round, which could define the season. Yes, it's still very early with another 17 games to go, a total of 51 points still up for grabs. The issue is not when United will drop points, which they

certainly will, but whether City is good enough to catch up. Being behind on the table means that any mistake you do, your putting yourself further and further away from catching up to the top.

Just look across the border to La Liga and Real Madrid. They're now 16 points Barcelona. Yes, its La Liga, it might not be as good, Barcelona might be best team ever etcetera, etcetera, but Madrid kept dropping points and now, if there is any hope of them catching out, they just don't need Barcelona to drop points, they cannot drop points.

City is in the exact same boat, meaning they can't afford to drop any more points. If the lead stretches out to 10 points or 12 points, it would need a massive United collapse, something that just doesn't happen to a Sir Alex side. United, are in a comfortable position, they can drop some points. Obviously, they don't want to drop any, but with any slip-up there is always the positive note that they are still ahead.

Of course, this is the Premier League, no points are guaranteed. United will be favourites against Liverpool being that it's

at Old Trafford. Brendan Rodgers though has crafted a promising team that with take the game on. Oh and then there is the whole Luis Suarez/Patrice Evra thing. Spicy enough?

And City face Arsenal. Hot-and-cold Arsenal. One week of brilliance, one week of ineptitude. Which Arsenal will show up this week? My guess is after a rather meagre display against Swansea, Wenger will at least attempt to fire up his men for this epic clash.

Which makes this weekend's clash so juicy. Because by the end it could ten points. Or it could be four, or it could still be the seven that separates the two clubs now. Would City crumble if they lost to Arsenal and United swatted Liverpool? Would Roberto Mancini bring out his "the league is over" speech? Would a ten-point cushion give United an over-confidence attitude for the rest of the season? Or if they lost, will the wheels fall off and they finally have a bad run?

Too many questions, too many answers. Just watch and find out.

Andrew Bishara runs the popular football website <http://thetrequartista.com>

The Premier League Title Is Up For Grabs, Who Wants It?



London Eye



By Robert Davis

A book on how to win the Premier League would consist of many straight forward formulas and essentials that in reality, would all have to click together in order achieve such success.

Consistency is crucial. A solid spine to the team that remains there for the majority of the campaign, from the goalkeeper to the striker. Getting a result when playing poorly, a goalscorer, depth within the squad, a solid goalkeeper and back four, a manager of the highest quality, team spirit. All cliché's perhaps, but all essential attributes that a team would need if they are to win the coveted trophy.

Look back at the great sides to have won the Premier League in previous years; Arsenal's invincibles in 2003/2004, Alex Ferguson's ever dominant Manchester United side in the late nineties and Chelsea's resurgence under José Mourinho in 2005. These teams had an air of perfection about them, they were unbeatable and it would take some performance to knock them out of their stride.

Even Manchester City last term had it about them, perhaps only an inexperienced manager almost causing them to lose the title at the final hurdle. The impressive home record, goals coming from

all over the pitch, a solid back four and goalkeeper, they had that formula and overall, deserved to win the title.

The 2012/2013 campaign has been a strange one to say the least for those at the top. The sides expected to challenge for the title seem to have lost their 'How To Win The Premier League' handbook.

United, unsurprisingly currently sit top of the table thanks largely to the signing of Robin Van Persie from their North London rivals. What should be noted is that without the Dutchman's goals, United would sit twelfth in the table instead of first. Other than the formidable strike force of Van Persie alongside either Wayne Rooney, Javier Hernandez or Danny Welbeck, the rest of the eleven doesn't seem as consistent as previous Ferguson title winning sides.

An ever changing goalkeeper and a defence that usually likes to give teams a head start before letting Van Persie dig them out of trouble is not the attributes given to a team worthy of winning the league (United have amassed 24 points from losing positions this season alone). Within the mid-field, the unsung performances of the ever-present Michael Carrick have shone in area where new signing Shinji Kagawa has suffered from injuries, whilst the lack of competition for Antonio Valencia and Ashley Young out wide has seen complacency appear in both players. If United do win the league, Van Persie may grab the plaudits, but Carrick's consistent performances will have played a massive part.

Seven points behind the leaders lie the Blue half of Manchester



Sir Alex hopes to lift a record 13th EPL title since taking the reins at Old Trafford back in 1986.

after struggling to replicate their run up to Christmas last year. Gone is the solid Vincent Kompany and Jolen Lescott partnership that worked so well together and with Edin Dzeko leading the goal-scoring charts at City, the Bosnian striker still fails to cement a place in the starting eleven. It's at the back though where Roberto Mancini's side have struggled this term though, having conceded 22 goals already compared to the 29 goals conceded throughout the whole of the last campaign.

The cause has been put down to captain Kompany's drop in exceptionally high standards, coinciding with a change in formation to the back four at the beginning of the season, with Mancini strangely choosing a back three with wing-backs instead of sticking with his proven back four. Ineffective summer signings have also failed to add anything new to

the Premier League champions as Scott Sinclair, Javi Garcia and Maicon have all struggled to fit into the squad.

At the danger of declaring the Premier League a two horse race half way through the season, third placed Tottenham Hotspur, who have taken advantage of fellow title challengers complacency for consistency, are an insurmountable thirteen points behind leaders United. Under a new manager with completely new ideas alongside a new look team, Spurs are certainly over achieving considering their current position. Is this down to the good performances of Andre Villas Boas' side, or the inconsistent results of those around them?

Chelsea and Arsenal have struggled to adhere to formulas that have served them well in previous successful Premier League campaigns as they sit fourth and sixth

respectively, the latter a mere 18 points from the top of the table.

Roman Abramovich's Chelsea have once again seemingly shot themselves in the foot with the sacking of crowd favourite and Champions League winner Roberto Di Matteo, replacing him with fellow Champions League winner Rafael Benitez, not a crowd favourite.

Benitez is known for his squad rotation policy, something that Chelsea fans found out all too well during a recent home loss to relegation strugglers Queens Park Rangers after dropping Juan Mata and Eden Hazard. A Premier League side has never won the league after changing their manager half way through a campaign. The Blues will certainly make the top four under Benitez, but as soon as they rid the services of Di Matteo, their chances of Premier League glory went out

the door with him.

Arsenal's well documented lack of silverware in the past seven years has almost wiped away their title credentials and their problems are not new to the 2012/2013 campaign.

The unwanted knack of letting key players leave each season and having to rebuild each summer is always difficult. Imagine if they had kept the likes of Van Persie, Cesc Fabregas and Samir Nasri. There is every chance they would be competing with the two Manchester clubs, this season more than any other.

The teams competing this season just aren't as strong as they have been in previous years. It will be the easiest Premier League title that has been up for grabs in a long time, where on paper, a Manchester United side are seemingly running away with it, yet in reality are there for the beating. Although Ferguson's knack of a good comeback is nothing new.

Has the Premier League had a sudden dip in standards or is such a weak attack on the crown down to a matter of complacency? Performances by English sides in Europe suggest a slip in standards, with only Arsenal and Manchester United reaching the final round of 16 as Chelsea and City failed to live up to high expectations.

It appears only Ferguson can rip up his 'How To Win The Premier League' handbook and get away with it. Other managers and chairmen need to put their pages back together and re-read it if they are going to win the league at any point within the foreseeable future.



Wrap Italia

By Luca Cetta

10-man Sampdoria stun Juventus!

Juventus and Fiorentina were left bewildered following shock home defeats, while Lazio moved clear into second position. Napoli thumped Roma, as Udinese belted Inter.

Juventus aimed to commence 2013 in the same manner 2012 finished. Four straight wins had seen their lead increase to eight points, with their nearest challengers tripping over. Despite this, Antonio Conte warned his side against taking their foot off the gas.

Defender Federico Peluso joined from Atalanta in a loan deal and was immediately thrust into the back three. Sampdoria had lost on Delio Rossi's debut and travelled to Turin without former Juve midfielder Enzo Maresca. Angelo Palombo was welcomed back after a season-long first-team exile.

After surviving an early scare when Andrea Poli shot meekly at Gianluigi Buffon, Juve took command. Claudio Marchisio was upended in the penalty area and Sebastian Giovinco slotted home. Samp were reduced to ten men when Gaetano Berardi received his second yellow card. But a free kick whistled just wide by former Juve winger Marcelo Estigarribia served as a warning.



Juventus took the lead through a penalty scored by Sebastian Giovinco, but Sampdoria, who played the final hour with just ten men, came back to win

It was not heeded. Mauro Icardi had space on the counter and his shot bounced in front of Buffon, who could only get a hand to the ball and watch it loop into the back of the net. Italy's number one may also done better on the second attempt as Icardi fired home at the near post. It was an amazing turnaround for the striker, who was supposed to be with Argentina's U20 squad before Samp vetoed his departure. Mirko Vucinic had two chances to equalise – including thumping the woodwork – but the ten held on for perhaps the upset of the season. Rossi celebrated his maiden Doria win, hailing the 2-1 result an 'incredible achievement.' "I am very happy as this was an incredible achievement. We won against the champions of Italy while playing with ten men. I made a tactical adjustment during the half-time break, but the lads were amazing in completing this comeback."

Giuseppe Rossi was in the stands

to watch new club Fiorentina days after signing a contract. The injured striker saw a frustrating match, as the Viola succumbed 2-0 to struggling Pescara to lose at home for the first time this season. Visiting shot-stopper Mattia Perin ensured the sides remained level, making a series of stunning saves. They proved to be crucial as Jonathas climbed highest to head home just before the hour. Fiorentina were shell-shocked and Mervin Celik countered to double the advantage in stoppage time.

This aided Lazio, who came from behind in somewhat controversial fashion to topple Cagliari. Marco Sau gave the visitors the lead just past the hour, but Abdoulay Konko equalised with 11 minutes remaining. Miroslav Klose was bundled over by goalkeeper Michael Agazzi in the 86th minute but had already fired a shot over the crossbar. Agazzi was shown a second yellow and Andrea Cossu sent off for taking his protests too

| ITALY Serie A | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|------------------|----|----|---|----|----|----|-----|-----|---------------------------------|-----|--|--|
| | P | W | D | L | F | A | GD | Pts | Last5Games Most recent first | | | |
| 1 Juventus | 19 | 14 | 2 | 3 | 40 | 13 | +27 | 44 | LW | WWW | | |
| 2 Lazio | 19 | 12 | 3 | 4 | 28 | 19 | +9 | 39 | WW | WDW | | |
| 3 Napoli | 19 | 12 | 3 | 4 | 37 | 18 | +19 | 37 | WW | LWL | | |
| 4 Fiorentina | 19 | 10 | 5 | 4 | 36 | 21 | +15 | 35 | LW | WLD | | |
| 5 Internazionale | 19 | 11 | 2 | 6 | 30 | 22 | +8 | 35 | LD | LWW | | |
| 6 Roma | 19 | 10 | 2 | 7 | 43 | 33 | +10 | 32 | LWL | WW | | |
| 7 Milan | 19 | 9 | 3 | 7 | 36 | 27 | +9 | 30 | WL | WWW | | |
| 8 Parma | 19 | 8 | 5 | 6 | 27 | 25 | +2 | 29 | WWW | L | | |
| 9 Udinese | 19 | 6 | 9 | 4 | 29 | 26 | +3 | 27 | WDD | WW | | |
| 10 Catania | 19 | 7 | 5 | 7 | 26 | 27 | -1 | 26 | DL | WWL | | |
| 11 Chievo | 19 | 7 | 3 | 9 | 21 | 29 | -8 | 24 | WL | WWW | | |
| 12 Atalanta | 19 | 7 | 3 | 9 | 18 | 28 | -10 | 22 | LD | LWL | | |
| 13 Torino | 19 | 4 | 9 | 6 | 20 | 22 | -2 | 20 | DW | DLL | | |
| 14 Sampdoria | 19 | 6 | 3 | 10 | 22 | 28 | -6 | 20 | WL | LD | | |
| 15 Pescara | 19 | 6 | 2 | 11 | 17 | 35 | -18 | 20 | WW | LWL | | |
| 16 Bologna | 19 | 5 | 3 | 11 | 21 | 26 | -5 | 18 | LL | WDW | | |
| 17 Genoa | 19 | 4 | 5 | 10 | 20 | 30 | -10 | 17 | W | DLL | | |
| 18 Cagliari | 19 | 4 | 4 | 11 | 17 | 35 | -18 | 16 | LL | LLL | | |
| 19 Palermo | 19 | 3 | 6 | 10 | 16 | 29 | -13 | 15 | LD | LL | | |
| 20 Siena | 19 | 4 | 5 | 10 | 17 | 28 | -11 | 11 | LL | LLL | | |

far. Antonio Candreva scored to put Lazio five points behind Juve. Edinson Cavani had a night to remember as Napoli crushed Roma 4-1. The Uruguayan netted a 'perfect' hat-trick, including the opener after four minutes. By the time Pablo Osvaldo found the net for Roma in the 73rd minute it was 3-1, with Cavani having completed his triple. Christian Maggio rounded out the scoring in injury time to send Napoli third.

Three second half goals gave Udinese the points over Inter. Typically, Antonio Di Natale was the focal point. He smashed the crossbar in the first half from a free kick and then opened the scoring. Luis Muriel doubled the advantage before Toto was on hand to wrap up the result near the end. Elsewhere, Milan did enough to secure a 2-1 win over bottom club Siena, while Chievo's lone goal saw them defeat Atalanta. Palermo thought they had earned a point

at Parma before a goalkeeper blunder gifted Amauri a late winner. Catania played for 75 minutes with ten men against Torino as it ended scoreless, while Genoa secured a much needed 2-0 win over Bologna. The second half of the season commences this weekend with Udinese aiming to bring themselves into European contention against Fiorentina. Vincenzo Montella insists last week's loss to Pescara was just a blip on the radar, but the Viola will not want to lose pace with the rest of the Champions League contenders. Especially when considering Inter, Roma and Milan are breathing down their necks.

Inter are the only one of the trio at home. They face Pescara, who helped their relegation fears with that shock sixth win of the campaign. Andrea Stramaccioni will be hopeful of recovering Diego Milito from injury, but Fredy Guarin and Andrea Ranocchia are suspended.

| Latest Results | This Week |
|--------------------------|----------------------|
| Catania 0 - 0 Torino | Bologna v Chievo |
| Lazio 2 - 1 Cagliari | Inter v Pescara |
| Udinese 3 - 0 Inter | Torino v More info |
| Chievo 1 - 0 Atalanta | Lazio v Atalanta |
| Fiorentina 0 - 2 Pescara | Udinese v Fiorentina |
| Genoa 2 - 0 Bologna | Cagliari v Genoa |
| Juventus 1 - 2 Sampdoria | Parma v Juventus |
| Milan 2 - 1 Siena | Napoli v Palermo |
| Parma 2 - 1 Palermo | Catania v Roma |
| Napoli 4 - 1 Roma | Sampdoria v Milan |

One To Watch This Weekend...
Parma are the only side to retain an unbeaten record at home this term. They have won six of their nine Stadio Tardini matches, but welcome champions Juventus, who have picked up 22 of 27 points on the road.

Roma travel to Catania, who are without influential playmaker Francesco Lodi through suspension. The Giallorossi will be missing Miralem Pjanic, also banned, as they look to bounce back from their big loss to Napoli. Milan face a buoyant Sampdoria in Genoa. The Blucerchiati defeated Milan in the opening round, but have since suffered more disappointment than joy this term. But after going to Turin and beating Juve they cannot be taken lightly. Elsewhere, in-form Parma host stunned Juventus, while high-flying Lazio are at home against Atalanta. Napoli are back on track and face travel-sick Palermo as Bologna welcome Chievo, who have won four of their past five matches. Cagliari are still smarting from their defeat in Rome as they entertain Genoa, while finally, Torino will be looking to move clear of the relegation zone when they square off against Siena.

It's Official: The Best Men Play In Spain



Viva Espana

By Pepe Lopez

This week at the 2012 FIFA Ballon d'Or awards, Spain and the Spanish La Liga completely monopolised football's international awards ceremony.

Lionel Messi won his 4th consecutive individual Ballon d'Or "Player of the Year" award and quite remarkably, the FIFA world team of the year consisted of 11 players who all play in the Spanish La Liga. 5 of these players are from Real Madrid; Iker Casillas, Sergio Ramos, Marcelo, Xabi Alonso and Cristiano Ronaldo. 5 players are from FC Barcelona; Lionel Messi, Gerard Pique, Daniel Alves, Xavi Hernandez and Andres Iniesta. The remaining player is from Atletico Madrid, Radamel Falcao.

If this was big enough statement already, the Ballon d'Or "Coach of the Year" award was presented to Spain's national coach, Vicente Del Bosque, who this year coached Spain to win the Euro 2012 Championships.

As quoted on FIFA.com, Lionel Messi said this on winning his 4th consecutive highest individual honour; "It's really nice to win it



Lionel Messi won a record-breaking fourth consecutive FIFA Ballon d'Or, and takes him past the three won by both former Brazil striker Ronaldo and former France midfielder Zinedine Zidane.

again, for a fourth consecutive time. I'm really very happy. The fact is I enjoy the things that happen to me, the awards I've won, and I hope I can now go on and win more titles with my club and my national team. My mind went blank and I couldn't think of what to say. All the same, I'd like to dedicate this award to my family."

The only non Real Madrid or FC Barcelona player in the world's best XI, Radamel Falcao was quoted on FIFA.com with the following; "When you see who the rest of the players are then it begins to sink in a little. It's a real privilege to be surrounded by so many stars, a real source of pride both for me

and for Atletico Madrid. The fact that the verdict comes from other professional players bring it into focus a bit more and makes it more interesting for us. I'm very grateful to them all."

Coach of the year, Vicente Del Bosque, had this to say after winning his award, for which many have interpreted to be a firing shot at the antics of current Real Madrid manager Jose Mourinho; "Those of us who have been in the sport so many years now realise we must protect it and look after it. I was speaking about football, what it means. It is our profession, it has been our lives, and we must take care of it a little. Often we protest

| SPAIN La Liga | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|----------------------|----|----|---|----|----|----|-----|-----|---------------------------------|------|--|--|
| | P | W | D | L | F | A | GD | Pts | Last5Games Most recent first | | | |
| 1 Barcelona | 18 | 17 | 1 | 0 | 61 | 19 | +42 | 52 | WWW | WWW | | |
| 2 Atlético Madrid | 18 | 13 | 2 | 3 | 38 | 18 | +20 | 41 | DWL | WL | | |
| 3 Real Madrid | 18 | 11 | 3 | 4 | 45 | 20 | +25 | 36 | WLD | WW | | |
| 4 Málaga | 18 | 9 | 4 | 5 | 28 | 13 | +15 | 31 | LW | WWL | | |
| 5 Real Betis | 18 | 10 | 1 | 7 | 28 | 29 | -1 | 31 | WL | WLW | | |
| 6 Levante | 18 | 9 | 3 | 6 | 24 | 25 | -1 | 30 | WL | WWD | | |
| 7 Rayo Vallecano | 18 | 9 | 1 | 8 | 25 | 33 | -8 | 28 | WW | WLL | | |
| 8 Valencia | 18 | 8 | 3 | 7 | 25 | 27 | -2 | 27 | WW | LWL | | |
| 9 Real Sociedad | 18 | 7 | 4 | 7 | 27 | 24 | +3 | 25 | LW | DDW | | |
| 10 Getafe | 18 | 7 | 3 | 8 | 22 | 28 | -6 | 24 | LL | DDW | | |
| 11 Sevilla | 18 | 6 | 4 | 8 | 23 | 26 | -3 | 22 | WL | LDL | | |
| 12 Real Valladolid | 18 | 6 | 4 | 8 | 24 | 24 | +0 | 22 | LD | LWL | | |
| 13 Real Zaragoza | 18 | 7 | 1 | 10 | 21 | 26 | -5 | 22 | LWL | WD | | |
| 14 Athletic Club | 18 | 6 | 3 | 9 | 22 | 37 | -15 | 21 | LL | WWL | | |
| 15 Celta de Vigo | 18 | 5 | 3 | 10 | 19 | 23 | -4 | 18 | WL | LLD | | |
| 16 Mallorca | 18 | 4 | 5 | 9 | 17 | 30 | -13 | 17 | D | WLLD | | |
| 17 Granada | 18 | 4 | 4 | 10 | 14 | 27 | -13 | 16 | LW | DL | | |
| 18 Espanyol | 18 | 3 | 6 | 9 | 19 | 30 | -17 | 15 | LW | DDD | | |
| 19 Deportivo La C... | 18 | 3 | 6 | 9 | 22 | 39 | -17 | 15 | LD | LLL | | |
| 20 Osasuna | 18 | 3 | 5 | 10 | 14 | 20 | -6 | 14 | LD | LLW | | |

for a penalty, a throw-in, or a debatable offside, which are not too important. We need to take care of the things which are important, for the health of the game.

Sometimes people say that coach is a winner, but everyone wants to win. You must know how to behave in victory and in defeat, to look after what is our sport, football." FIFA Ballon d'Or Female honours were awarded to Sweden's women's national team coach Pia Sundhage, and USA's Abby Wambach claimed her first FIFA Women's World Player of the Year award.



BEST OF THE BEST... the FIFA/FIFPro World XI, top (l-r): Ronaldo, Marcelo, Ramos, Pique, Alves, Casillas. Bottom (l-r) Falcao, Messi, Iniesta, Xavi, Alonso

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CROATIA

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Last5games
Most recent first


| | P | W | D | L | F | A | GD | Pts | |
|---------------------|----|----|---|----|----|----|-----|-----|-------|
| 1 Dinamo Zagreb | 18 | 13 | 2 | 3 | 39 | 14 | +25 | 41 | WLWLW |
| 2 Hajduk Split | 19 | 9 | 6 | 4 | 27 | 14 | +13 | 33 | WDDDW |
| 3 Lokomotiva | 19 | 9 | 5 | 5 | 27 | 21 | +6 | 32 | WLWDW |
| 4 Rijeka | 19 | 9 | 5 | 5 | 28 | 23 | +5 | 32 | DDWWL |
| 5 Slaven Koprivnica | 19 | 9 | 4 | 6 | 28 | 26 | +2 | 31 | DWLWL |
| 6 Split | 19 | 9 | 3 | 7 | 28 | 22 | +6 | 30 | LWWLW |
| 7 Osijek | 18 | 5 | 8 | 5 | 19 | 17 | +2 | 23 | LDLDL |
| 8 Istra 1961 | 19 | 5 | 5 | 9 | 17 | 22 | -5 | 20 | LDLLW |
| 9 Inter Zaprešić | 19 | 4 | 7 | 8 | 21 | 25 | -4 | 19 | LLLWD |
| 10 Zadar | 19 | 4 | 5 | 10 | 20 | 36 | -16 | 17 | WDWLW |
| 11 Cibalia | 19 | 4 | 4 | 11 | 16 | 31 | -15 | 16 | LDLWL |
| 12 Zagreb | 19 | 4 | 4 | 11 | 12 | 31 | -19 | 16 | WDWLL |

GERMANY Bundesliga



| | P | W | D | L | F | A | GD | Pts | Last5games | Most recent first |
|-----------------------|----|----|---|----|----|----|-----|-----|------------|-------------------|
| 1 Bayern München | 17 | 13 | 3 | 1 | 44 | 7 | +37 | 42 | D W D W W | |
| 2 Bayer Leverkusen | 17 | 10 | 3 | 4 | 33 | 22 | +11 | 33 | W L W W W | |
| 3 Borussia Dortmund | 17 | 8 | 6 | 3 | 35 | 20 | +15 | 30 | W L D D W | |
| 4 Eintracht Fran... | 17 | 9 | 3 | 5 | 33 | 27 | +6 | 30 | W W L D D | |
| 5 Freiburg | 17 | 7 | 5 | 5 | 24 | 18 | +6 | 26 | W W D L W | |
| 6 Mainz 05 | 17 | 8 | 2 | 7 | 24 | 21 | +3 | 26 | W L W W L | |
| 7 Schalke 04 | 17 | 7 | 4 | 6 | 27 | 25 | +2 | 25 | L L D L D | |
| 8 Borussia M'gla... | 17 | 6 | 7 | 4 | 25 | 26 | -1 | 25 | D W D W D | |
| 9 Stuttgart | 17 | 7 | 4 | 6 | 21 | 28 | -7 | 25 | L W W W L | |
| 10 Hamburger SV | 17 | 7 | 3 | 7 | 18 | 21 | -3 | 24 | L W D W L | |
| 11 Hannover 96 | 17 | 7 | 2 | 8 | 32 | 31 | +1 | 23 | L W L W L | |
| 12 Werder Bremen | 17 | 6 | 4 | 7 | 28 | 29 | -1 | 22 | D L W L D | |
| 13 Fortuna Düsseldorf | 17 | 5 | 6 | 6 | 20 | 22 | -2 | 21 | W L W D W | |
| 14 Nürnberg | 17 | 5 | 5 | 7 | 17 | 22 | -5 | 20 | D W L W D | |
| 15 Wolfsburg | 17 | 5 | 4 | 8 | 17 | 27 | -10 | 19 | L W D L D | |
| 16 Hoffenheim | 17 | 3 | 3 | 11 | 23 | 41 | -18 | 12 | L L L L L | |
| 17 Augsburg | 17 | 1 | 6 | 10 | 12 | 29 | -17 | 9 | D L D L D | |
| 18 Greuther Fürth | 17 | 1 | 6 | 10 | 11 | 28 | -17 | 9 | D L L L D | |

THE CHAMPIONSHIP



| | P | W | D | L | F | A | GD | Pts | Last5games | Most recent first |
|----------------------|----|----|----|----|----|-----|-----|-----------|------------|-------------------|
| 1 Cardiff City | 26 | 18 | 2 | 6 | 48 | 29 | +19 | 56 | W W W W L | |
| 2 Hull City | 26 | 15 | 4 | 7 | 37 | 27 | +10 | 49 | D W D W W | |
| 3 Crystal Palace | 26 | 13 | 8 | 5 | 50 | 34 | +16 | 47 | W D L D D | |
| 4 Middlesbrough | 26 | 15 | 2 | 9 | 46 | 36 | +10 | 47 | L W W W L | |
| 5 Leicester City | 26 | 13 | 5 | 8 | 44 | 23 | +21 | 44 | W W D L L | |
| 6 Watford | 25 | 12 | 4 | 9 | 47 | 36 | +11 | 40 | L W W D L | |
| 7 Millwall | 26 | 11 | 7 | 8 | 39 | 35 | +4 | 40 | W L L D W | |
| 8 Leeds United | 26 | 11 | 5 | 10 | 38 | 42 | -4 | 38 | W L L W W | |
| 9 Brighton & Hov... | 25 | 9 | 10 | 6 | 35 | 26 | +9 | 37 | W L D D D | |
| 10 Derby County | 26 | 10 | 7 | 9 | 40 | 38 | +2 | 37 | W D L L W | |
| 11 Nottingham Forest | 26 | 9 | 10 | 7 | 36 | 35 | +1 | 37 | L D W L D | |
| 12 Burnley | 26 | 10 | 6 | 10 | 40 | 40 | +0 | 36 | W L W D D | |
| 13 Blackburn Rovers | 25 | 9 | 8 | 8 | 35 | 33 | +2 | 35 | W L L L L | |
| 14 Blackpool | 26 | 8 | 10 | 8 | 43 | 38 | +5 | 34 | D L D L W | |
| 15 Charlton Athletic | 26 | 8 | 9 | 9 | 34 | 36 | -2 | 33 | W D L L L | |
| 16 Bolton Wanderers | 26 | 8 | 8 | 10 | 39 | 40 | -1 | 32 | L W L L W | |
| 17 Huddersfield Town | 26 | 8 | 10 | 31 | 43 | -12 | 32 | L D D D L | | |
| 18 Wolverhampton ... | 26 | 9 | 4 | 13 | 32 | 38 | -6 | 31 | L L L W L | |
| 19 Ipswich Town | 26 | 8 | 6 | 12 | 27 | 48 | -21 | 30 | L W W D L | |
| 20 Birmingham City | 26 | 7 | 8 | 11 | 33 | 42 | -9 | 29 | L L W D D | |
| 21 Peterborough U... | 26 | 8 | 1 | 17 | 37 | 49 | -12 | 25 | L W W W W | |
| 22 Sheffield Wedn... | 26 | 7 | 4 | 15 | 28 | 42 | -14 | 25 | L D W W W | |
| 23 Bristol City | 25 | 6 | 4 | 15 | 38 | 50 | -12 | 22 | L W L W L | |
| 24 Barnsley | 26 | 5 | 6 | 15 | 26 | 43 | -17 | 21 | L L L W L | |

Greece

Super League



| | P | W | D | L | F | A | GD | Pts | Last5games | | Most recent first | | |
|----------------------|----|----|---|----|----|----|-----|-----|------------|---|-------------------|---|---|
| 1 Olympiakos Piraeus | 16 | 13 | 3 | 0 | 38 | 10 | +28 | 42 | W | W | D | W | D |
| 2 PAOK | 16 | 10 | 4 | 2 | 25 | 10 | +15 | 34 | W | W | W | D | D |
| 3 Asteras Tripolis | 16 | 8 | 4 | 4 | 22 | 11 | +11 | 28 | W | L | D | D | W |
| 4 Atromitos | 16 | 7 | 7 | 2 | 17 | 12 | +5 | 28 | W | D | W | D | W |
| 5 Levadiakos | 16 | 7 | 3 | 6 | 13 | 13 | +0 | 24 | W | W | L | W | W |
| 6 PAS Giannina | 16 | 6 | 4 | 6 | 16 | 15 | +1 | 22 | D | L | W | L | W |
| 7 Panionios | 16 | 7 | 0 | 9 | 18 | 22 | -4 | 21 | L | L | L | L | L |
| 8 Panthrakikos | 16 | 6 | 2 | 8 | 17 | 20 | -3 | 20 | L | W | W | D | W |
| 9 Panathinaikos | 16 | 5 | 7 | 4 | 17 | 17 | +0 | 20 | L | D | W | L | L |
| 10 Xanthi | 16 | 4 | 6 | 6 | 14 | 16 | -2 | 18 | W | D | W | D | L |
| 11 OFI | 16 | 4 | 5 | 7 | 16 | 21 | -5 | 17 | L | W | L | D | L |
| 12 Platanias | 16 | 4 | 5 | 7 | 14 | 19 | -5 | 17 | D | L | D | L | W |
| 13 Aris | 16 | 3 | 7 | 6 | 14 | 23 | -9 | 16 | W | D | D | D | L |
| 14 Veria | 16 | 3 | 6 | 7 | 10 | 20 | -10 | 15 | L | W | D | D | D |
| 15 AEK Athens | 16 | 3 | 3 | 10 | 12 | 20 | -8 | 12 | L | D | L | W | L |
| 16 Kerkyra | 16 | 2 | 6 | 8 | 7 | 21 | -14 | 12 | L | L | L | L | D |

TURKEY

Süper Lig



| | P | W | D | L | F | A | GD | Pts | Last5games Most recent first |
|----------------------|----|---|---|---|----|----|-----|-----|---------------------------------|
| 1 Galatasaray | 17 | 9 | 6 | 2 | 34 | 20 | +14 | 33 | DWDDW |
| 2 Beşiktaş | 17 | 8 | 6 | 3 | 38 | 25 | +13 | 30 | WDDWW |
| 3 Antalyaspor | 16 | 9 | 3 | 4 | 28 | 21 | +7 | 30 | WDWDL |
| 4 Fenerbahçe | 17 | 7 | 6 | 4 | 25 | 19 | +6 | 27 | LLWDW |
| 5 Eskişehirspor | 17 | 6 | 6 | 5 | 32 | 23 | +9 | 24 | LDDDD |
| 6 Bursaspor | 17 | 5 | 9 | 3 | 26 | 20 | +6 | 24 | DDWDD |
| 7 Trabzonspor | 17 | 6 | 6 | 5 | 19 | 15 | +4 | 24 | DLDWL |
| 8 Karabükspor | 17 | 7 | 3 | 7 | 23 | 26 | -3 | 24 | WWWLL |
| 9 Kasımpaşa | 17 | 6 | 5 | 6 | 24 | 20 | +4 | 23 | LLDDW |
| 10 Sivasspor | 17 | 6 | 4 | 7 | 21 | 24 | -3 | 22 | WLLLL |
| 11 Gençlerbirliği | 17 | 4 | 9 | 4 | 25 | 26 | -1 | 21 | DDLLL |
| 12 İstanbul BB | 17 | 6 | 3 | 8 | 19 | 20 | -1 | 21 | WWLWL |
| 13 Orduspor | 17 | 4 | 8 | 5 | 19 | 19 | +0 | 20 | DDLDD |
| 14 Gaziantepspor | 17 | 5 | 5 | 7 | 16 | 24 | -8 | 20 | WDLDW |
| 15 Kayserispor | 17 | 5 | 4 | 8 | 22 | 29 | -7 | 19 | LWDDL |
| 16 Elazığspor | 17 | 3 | 7 | 7 | 11 | 27 | -16 | 16 | LDWWL |
| 17 Mersin İdmanyurdu | 17 | 3 | 6 | 8 | 18 | 27 | -9 | 15 | LLWLL |
| 18 Akhisar Beledi... | 16 | 2 | 6 | 8 | 11 | 26 | -15 | 12 | DLDLL |

HOLLAND Eredivisie



| | P | W | D | L | F | A | GD | Pts | Last5games | Most recent first |
|----------------|----|----|---|----|----|----|-----|-----|------------|-------------------|
| 1 PSV | 18 | 13 | 1 | 4 | 60 | 18 | +42 | 40 | WDWLL | |
| 2 Twente | 18 | 12 | 4 | 2 | 35 | 14 | +21 | 40 | WWLWD | |
| 3 Ajax | 18 | 10 | 7 | 1 | 42 | 20 | +22 | 37 | DWWWWW | |
| 4 Feyenoord | 18 | 11 | 4 | 3 | 37 | 23 | +14 | 37 | WWDDWW | |
| 5 Vitesse | 18 | 10 | 5 | 3 | 34 | 18 | +16 | 35 | LDLWW | |
| 6 Utrecht | 18 | 8 | 6 | 4 | 24 | 19 | +5 | 30 | DWDWL | |
| 7 NEC | 18 | 6 | 6 | 6 | 24 | 30 | -6 | 24 | LDLDW | |
| 8 ADO Den Haag | 18 | 5 | 8 | 5 | 30 | 29 | +1 | 23 | WDLWL | |
| 9 RKC Waalwijk | 18 | 5 | 7 | 6 | 24 | 32 | +2 | 22 | DWDLD | |
| 10 Heracles | 18 | 4 | 8 | 6 | 35 | 35 | 0 | 20 | DLDLD | |
| 11 Groningen | 18 | 5 | 5 | 8 | 18 | 28 | -10 | 20 | LDLWD | |
| 12 AZ | 18 | 4 | 6 | 8 | 23 | 32 | -9 | 18 | LDLWL | |
| 13 Heerenveen | 18 | 4 | 6 | 8 | 27 | 38 | -11 | 18 | WDLDL | |
| 14 PEC Zwolle | 18 | 3 | 6 | 9 | 17 | 29 | -12 | 15 | DLDDD | |
| 15 Roda JC | 18 | 3 | 6 | 9 | 22 | 37 | -15 | 15 | WDDLL | |
| 16 VVV | 18 | 3 | 6 | 9 | 22 | 38 | -16 | 15 | LDWDD | |
| 17 NAC Breda | 18 | 3 | 5 | 10 | 15 | 37 | -22 | 14 | LDDDL | |
| 18 Willem II | 18 | 2 | 6 | 10 | 16 | 38 | -22 | 12 | DLWDW | |



World Game

By Daniel Campos

The backdrop of Australian Indigenous football players is at the very least unique and very interesting. Names such as John Moriarty, Harry Williams who are past Socceroos have played a big part in cementing a spot in the Australian sporting landscape.

These names are also an inspiration and an influence in claiming a presence in a sporting national team and for some of the current crop of international capped players. It is the Socceroos after all who get unmatched global exposure and competition like no other.

And Borroloola, located in the Gulf of Carpentaria in the Northern Territory is the birthplace of John Moriarty, the first selected Indigenous Socceroo before he was taken away in what our nation calls it one of the saddest and controversial acts, the Stolen Generation.

Instead of growing up in the country, Moriarty grew up with the immigrant communities and of course, his preferred ball was round. And more than forty years later, in March 2012 his dream became a reality.

It was the birth of the not-for-profit organisation, John Moriarty Football - a branch of the "Nangala Project" which is part of his co-founded company.

Football Federation NT coaching instructor George Singh was flown over to the remote community to coach potential coaches, most in average just 12, 13 years of age. It was an exciting prospect to see such enthusiasm and energy, not to mention the way these children play.

With rhythm in abundance, with speed in bare feet and resistance to withhold any extreme weather, especially humidity and the heat, the Yanyuwa Oval is the heartland where the four predominant communities or tribes live, and where the Borroloola



Cyclones train and play.

Being the Barramundi capital of Australia and perhaps of the world is an excellent precedent for government-funded program to take shape. Goal! Weekly's own Francis Fields took his moniker off for six months to kick-start the world's best practice and get the ball rolling.

Both boys and girls aged from 6-10 officially trained twice a week in conjunction with the town's Primary School who cooperated enthusiastically and three months later, an even more remote community off the McArthur River - Robinson River joined in.

The JMF program received its first results with four girls from the primary school selected to represent the Roper Gulf region in the 2012 NT School Sports competition and went on to be selected to represent the Territory in the National Championships.

Borroloola's pioneer football coach, Glenn Thompson was also once again pivotal in making the program happen. The Tasmanian-born adventurer who is dedicated to the game for decades was delighted to see not just a program integrating the community with the school but the game to "truly be back on the agenda".

These local kids are aware of Kyah Simon's exploits, have heard of Melbourne Heart's David Williams and have met Travis Dodd during his Adelaide United days. Newcastle Jets' James Brown took part in a futsal-run training session back in May with junior clubs from the Northern Beaches of Sydney with John Moriarty Football and SBS' Craig Foster. All in all, it was a wonderful afternoon and a superb initiative to further unite cultural and football ties.

"You see kids here who can play all

sorts of sports. It's good you know, but we got true potential here. They just got to have more competition, trophies and teams to play for because there are problems that exist," reflected 'Marlboo' as he is warmly known.

Those off-field issues carry on for generations unfortunately but there is no doubt that what makes Australians proud is their ability to play sport and especially at the top level. To be guided, mentored and taught the values of life through football specifically speaking.

A second term began for JMF as succeeding technical coach Josh Smith arrived into town in October 2012 to continue my initial six months' work and has done wonderfully well to continue integrating members of the community, including the secondary school and the family relatives to get behind it.

Josh absorbed the cultural factors right away upon arrival and got right into it by running a mini A-League competition at the Oval. Not only was it a success but more kids want to play and be a part of it.

The Robinson River Primary School also takes part in the arduous three-hour journey on gravel road to play with their nearby community cousins. Australia's last World Cup 2014 qualifier in Brisbane against Japan was also an exciting occasion for John Moriarty Football with both Tim Cahill and Mark Schwarzer pledging their support by putting their hands up for the program.

Following the broadcast on SBS of FFA's National Indigenous Football Festival held recently in Alice Springs, there is reason to think that the program is not only expanding but setting a standard so to cover all Indigenous Australians with a heart that pumps in true football blood.

As for Indigenous Australians their very own tribal lifestyle and background is enough in itself to be proud of. It is indeed a question of time before the next crop of talent reach the top and most importantly, up to the children themselves to train hard and follow the pathways provided to perform consistently.



For more details visit the Nangala Project on: www.nangalaproject.org.au

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